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REVIEW



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HIGH VOLTAGE!

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A close-up, low-angle shot of a motocross handlebar and front fork. The handlebar is black with a red and white 'YOSHIMURA' logo on the left side. The fork is silver and shows signs of use. The background is blurred, suggesting motion.

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COVER: Red Bull X-Fighter Levi Sherwood proves that Kiwis can actually fly in front of a packed-out Battersea crowd...
© Jörg Mitter/Red Bull Photofiles

CONTENTS: Marvin Musquin gets on the gas in the power-sapping Dutch sand of Lierop!
© Sarah Gutierrez





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CHAD REED

COMMENT

A few years ago I learnt a valuable lesson about diplomacy – never, no matter how big a p***k he may be, inform your MD of this fact in a knee-jerk email. Obviously, I'm still here so I survived the ensuing shite storm and (I hasten to add) my current MD is a fine fellow who despite his advancing years still attracts admiring looks from the ladies and isn't afraid to make tough business decisions in the boardroom – I like to think of him as a cross between George Clooney and Alan Sugar.

Anyway, I'm going off on one so let's get back to the matter in hand. As this 'ere issue of DBR was being wrapped up we heard a rumour that British MXdN Team Manager Mark Eastwood was, er, no longer British MXdN Team Manager. Apparently – according to The Internet – Youthstream were so outraged by Easty's recent negative comments about themselves and their President Giuseppe Luongo they told the ACU he wouldn't be welcome at the MXdN and Mark then resigned his position. Or was sacked by the ACU. We gave Mark a bell to see if there was any substance to the rumours but he wouldn't speak to us, then we got official word from the ACU that they had decided to 'withdraw Mark Eastwood from the post of manager' because of his aforementioned detrimental remarks. So he was sacked!

Easty's never been one to bite his tongue and that's an admirable quality that fits perfectly with his uncompromising style on the track. But it's not always the best way to go about things and occasionally compromises have to be reached. For example, I agreed with my former MD that I wouldn't refer to him as a big p***k again and, in return, he didn't let our merciless HR department loose on my ass. Okay, so I had to eat a bit of humble pie but – hey – like I said I'm still here, he's not and I can now call him a big p***k to my heart's content.

Being the British MXdN Team Manager is, anyway, on a par with being the Captain of the Titanic or even Editor of MotoX – it may start off well and look good on paper but, ultimately, it's a poisoned chalice. A thankless task. Dave Thorpe, Rob Herring, Mark Eastwood – all heroes on the track but when it comes to picking a team capable of lifting the Eric, sorry, Peter Chamberlain Trophy they've been on a hiding to nothing (apart from '94 – skills DT)! And, irrespective of Mark's untimely demise, our '09 team has provoked just as much controversy as any other.

To be fair to Easty, this year's team has also been one of the toughest to pick! Faced with a choice between undoubtedly (but under-performing or recently back from injury) potential world beaters and solid, deserving, popular riders, Mark has – for me at least – gone for what I'd call the surprisingly safe option. Tommy Searle (MX2), Brad Anderson (MX1) and Carl Nunn (MX3) is a decent, respectable team and all three riders' places can be easily justified. But it has not got a hope in hell of setting the world on fire.

Brad's had the best season of his life and he fully deserves his Maxxis MX1 title and Nunny's looking awesome in the Red Bull Pro Nationals series but I can't honestly see either of them running top 10 in their races. However, despite having seasons ruined through injury and/or poor form, both Billy MacKenzie and Stephen Sword could run top 10 or even higher – even with Swordy on a 450. The MX2 ride is a tougher one to call – Searle or Shaun Simpson's inclusion could both produce strong rides. The MXdN is a lottery of sorts – a one-lap sprint compared to a 40-minute moto – and I'd much rather we had a team that went s**t or bust for a podium finish like last year than settled for a comfortable, solid score.

Reet, I'm going to finish up this month with a few questions. Did the ACU do the right thing by dropping Easty like a hot turd? Or should they have stood up to Youthstream? Is, in this case, diplomacy the right path to take or should they have stood by their Team Manager and refused to back down? C'mon, it's a no-brainer! Whether you agree with Mark's team selection or not or whether you think he should sometimes keep his trap shut or not, the ACU should have had the cojones to back him up.

He's been sacked to appease Youthstream and that – and balls to diplomacy – is an utter disgrace...



New British MX1 champ
Bradley Anderson snapped
in reflective mood

NEWSHUND!

DEPUTY DAWG'S DIRTY DELIVERY OF OFF-ROAD NEWS

It's less than three weeks now until the 2009 Red Bull Motocross des Nations goes off on the weekend of October 3/4 in Franciacorta in Italy and the list of confirmed entrants is coming together nicely. The British des Nats squad has finally been confirmed by (former) Team Manager Mark Eastwood with British champion Brad Anderson riding the MX1 machine, Tommy Searle taking the MX2 berth and MVR-D Suzuki's Carl Nunn doing battle in the MX3 division. The Irish squad meanwhile will see Stuart Edmonds, Martin Barr and Graeme Irwin do their bit to uphold the honour of the Emerald Isle.

Other teams to announce their line-ups include the defending champs USA (Ivan Tedesco, Ryan Dungey and Jake Weimer), Australia (Chad Reed, Brett Metcalfe and Michael Byrne), the event hosts Italy (Tony Cairoli, Davide Guarneri and David Philippaerts), Belgium (Clement Desalle, Joel Roelants and Steve Ramon) and my favourites to take the win – France (Nico Aubin, Gautier Paulin and Marvin Musquin).

With the Americans sending something of a B-squad hopes are high among the Europeans for a non-Yank victory and we'll of course all be keeping our digits crossed at DBR HQ for a British team win. For more details on this amazing event – including updated entry lists, track and ticket details etc then log on to www.redbullmxon.com – but if you're not lucky enough to be trackside on the fourth then remember you can catch all the action on www.freecaster.tv...

If you're a regular viewer of freeloader TV – or indeed the rather fantastic GP coverage on Motors TV – then you'll already know that speedy Sicilian Tony Cairoli has already wrapped up the MX1 world title ahead of the season finale in Brazil while the MX2 class will go to the wire in a bar-to-bar battle between Marvin Musquin and Rui Goncalves. Other champions crowned this month include Brad Anderson (British MX1), Stephen Sword (British MX2), Chad Reed (AMA 450), Johnny Aubert (World Enduro 2) and Steffi Laier (WMX).

Joining Laier on the women's world championship podium after the final round in Holland are Suzuki starlets Larissa Papenmeier and Northern Ireland's Natalie Kane who finishes a fine third in

the series standings on her MVR-D machine. After finishing fourth overall in the deep sands of Lierop behind champion Laier, surprise package of the weekend on her 125cc two-stroke machine Chiara Fontanesi and Papenmeier, Natalie was able to leapfrog the injured Maria Franke in the title race to claim the bronze medal position.

"Although I love the Lierop track it's still been a tough weekend of racing," say Natalie. "Race one didn't quite go to plan but I managed to get my head down in the second moto and eventually just settled for third spot behind Fontanesi, keeping it upright to take the final podium spot in the series standings. To say I'm pleased is an understatement. I'd just like to thank the whole team for providing me with such a great package this season and for everyone's support along the way."

Other Brits in the WMX series include CCM Racing's Alix Dunlop who ends the championship in 22nd position while TWMA Kawasaki's Kerry Wilson edges out privateer Sophia Paull to 26th. An injury packed season sees UTAG Yamaha's speedy 16-year-old Megan Lewis fail to feature on the results sheets all year although there's still some reason to celebrate for the Portsmouth nipper as she recently announced on her website – www.meganlewis12.com – that she'll be getting engaged to her boyfriend Cedric Soubreyas.

While the regular racing season is coming to an end the silly season of speculation about who'll be riding where is warming up nicely. It seems that Clement Desalle will be headed to Teka Suzuki, Jon Barragan and Xavier Boog will join Seb Pourcel at the Kawasaki Racing Team, MX1 world champion Tony Cairoli and series runner-up Max Nagl will get together on factory KTM's and Gautier Paulin and David Philippaerts will spearhead factory Yamahas in Monster Energy team colours.

Closer to home Billy MacKenzie will stay with CAS Honda possibly alongside Josh Coppins – although that's yet to be confirmed – while Red Bull KTM UK's Roger Magee was able to confirm that "Jake Nicholls and Graeme Irwin will run in MX2 next year while we're currently in negotiations with a few MX1 riders – obviously Stephen Sword's in the frame for the ride on the 350 or 450 that he's already showed he can ride very well with an outing

Sean



WMX world champ
Steffi Laier

© J. Edmunds

Shaun's special suspension

at the Red Bull Pro Nationals". While there are no real surprises with the team selection the news that KTM has an actual 350cc four-stroke in the pipeline does come as quite a shock.

We checked with our contacts at KTM who had this to say... "Because lap times of a 250 SX are significantly faster on many circuits than those of a large four-stroke and because even experienced riders sometimes categorise the 'big four-stroke' machines as too powerful KTM is investigating various motor concepts with a displacement between 250 and 450cc. Quite apart from the results, it is not to be excluded that KTM may introduce a displacement of somewhere between 250 and 450cc onto the market. In the past, KTM has already had good success with displacements like 200, 360, 380 and 400cc."

In other KTM technical news we also spotted one of them there fangled rising rate suspension linkage jobbies on Shaun Simpson's factory KTM at Duns and although neither he nor his rather handsome spanner spinner Stefan would comment on it we found someone in the Austrian factory who would – not that we actually learnt anything new from speaking to them.

"Since the introduction of the PDS in 1997 there have been a number of attempts undertaken to compare the PDS system with a linkage system. The concept advantages of the KTM PDS is however unbeatable, especially for use in the area of enduro. Nevertheless, attempts with the linkage system continue in the area of MX. Because of the current sporting success in MX1 and MX2 the factory team would do themselves no favours by throwing a system overboard that involved years of work and which has been constantly improved."

Okay then... It's a generally quite exciting time technically for the off-road industry especially with the arrival earlier this week of the 2010 YZ450F. Up until its top secret launch at the start of September very little in the way of facts were actually known about this bike that was causing quite a buzz. Head online to www.dirtbikerider.com for the full lowdown on this awesome new weapon – let's hope it rides as well as it looks.

There are two big events ready to rock your



WHERE'S ZACH?

FIND OSBORNE AND WIN TCX PRO 2 BOOTS

This month thanks to our bezzie mates at Nevis Marketing we've got another top-of-the-range pair of TCX Pro 2 booties to give away.

Somewhere within the pages of this very issue we've superimposed the UTAG Yamaha star's disembodied noggin onto an innocent bystander. If you can spot it (and no Einstein, not the one on this page) then you could win the boots – simple, eh?

All you have to do is locate Merkin's mallet and then text the word **DBRZACH** followed by a space, the page number, another space and then your name and postcode to **81800**. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **October 8** with the first correct entry chosen at random getting the boots in a size of their choice...

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GOLDENPAD

WIN A PAIR OF RENTHAL HANDLEBARS

Renthal, as everyone knows, builds champions – and one lucky reader can have their very own piece of this winning heritage with our great monthly competition.

Have a close look at our pic of this golden Renthal bar pad, then flick through this month's mag and find the full pic we've taken it from. Once you've found it simply text the word **DBRRENT** followed by a space, the page number it appears on, another space and then your name and postcode to 81800. You'll receive a text back confirming your entry to this competition.*

Entries close on **October 8** with the first correct entry chosen at random getting a pair of Renthal handlebars of their choice...



Natalie Kane takes third in the world

socks in October and they are the Weston Beach Race that will be held on October 9/10/11 and the opening round of the Indoor Enduro World Cup that'll electrify Sheffield's Hallam FM Arena on the 31st – mmmm, Halloweeny. While the IEWC race is a new event on the UK calendar the Weston beach blast needs little introduction although it's claimed that this year's commotion by the ocean will be better than ever.

It all kicks off on Friday with scrutineering and stuff on the prom-tiddly-om and some minibike racing down on the beach before Gareth Hockey hosts a Weston welcome party with live music and some karaoke classics. Saturday sees youth quad and 65cc race action down on the beach followed by the three-hour sidecar and quad event and a death-defying world record attempt by Flyin' Ryan Griffiths who wowed the crowd at Moto-1 a few years back with one of the most horrible crashes

ever seen (which also earned him the nickname 'Dyin' Ryan'). Sunday's all about the main race and with support coming from the 85cc kiddies and the Red Bull Matadors aerial display team it sure will be a day to remember. Keep an eye on www.wbruk.com for the latest news and stuff.

Three weeks after that it's Halloween and not only does that give you an excuse to dress up like a slut but also to head to the city of steel for an evening of world championship endurocross race action. The Sheffield event is promising to be the indoor motorcycling spectacle of the year as reigning IEWC champion Ivan Cervantes, David Knight, Taddy Blazusiak, Mike Brown, Dougie Lampkin, Gordon Crockard and Graham Jarvis all go head-to-head for world championship points. Tickets are available right now by calling **0114 256 5656** or by heading online to www.sheffieldarena.co.uk. See you there...





Wakker – going downhill fast!



GRAVITY GRAMPS!

WACKER TAKES TOP 20 FINISH AT WORLD CHAMPS BICYCLE BASH FOR OVER-35s...

DBR's #1 tool fool Geoff Walker – who once met intrepid explorer Charlie Boorman in a hotel bar – took some time out from his hard schedule of riding at Marshfield, drinking in the Lord Nelson and not getting his column done on time. Why? To take on the world's best elderly mountain bike stars in the UCI Masters Mountain Bike World Championship.

Riding in the class for 35 to 39-year-olds at the event in France, Wacker wheeled his long-travel Lapierre down the mountain to take an astounding 18th place in the final run in a truly world class field including former world cup legends Tomas Misser and Christian Taillefer.

All p**s-taking aside, total respect is definitely due and finishing 18th in a bona fide world championship event after not even racing a DH bike in over a decade is a feat not to be sniffed at.

"It's one of the greatest moments of my life after meeting Charlie Boorman," reckons Geoff. "I trained really hard for it and I put my absolute narks into that final run. Finishing 18th in the world is something that nobody can ever take away from me – it was an emotional moment for sure. I really have to thank Mark and Paula at ISO2, Philip and Philippe at No Fear, Lapierre bicycles, Chris, Michael and Tina at Chain Reaction Cycles, Anthony Revell at Revell bicycles and obviously Han and TJ at home!"

NEWSENSATION!

BOLTER WINS SPRINT ENDURO

DBR columnist Jonty Edmunds, a former EEC contender and on occasions a fierce critic of the way the sport is heading, put his money where his mouth is when he staged Britain's first-ever sprint enduro with the backing of Putoline Oils at Cwmythig Hill, Rhayader.

Basically a simplified enduro, riders competed over a number of special tests but instead of heading off into the forestry in the usual, time-served way at the end of each test they returned to a pit area. This made them more accessible to spectators and media and with constant special tests throughout the day it ensured plenty of continuous action.

"I've long been thinking of how enduro sport can be made more spectator friendly while giving Britain's top riders more competitive special test time," explains Jonty. "In Australia they run similar events – they are unable to race together there away from motocross tracks as dust is a big problem. Obviously we don't have the same problem with dust here but the format has numerous advantages, all of which are good for enduro sport in general."

The Rhayader event attracted some of the UK's top names and at the end of just over 90 minutes in the saddle it was Daryl Bolter who ran out winner from Greg Evans and Philip McLaughlin.

For a video report of the event check out the news section of www.dirtbikerider.com

ROMANIACS!

WORLD'S TOUGHEST ENDURO
RALLYE ROCKS ROMANIA

Bavaria's Andrea Lettenbichler battled his way to victory in the 2009 Red Bull Romaniacs after beating off some very stiff opposition including three-time winner Cyril Despres and brave Brits Graham Jarvis and Paul Bolton. By riding his factory G450X to victory in the five-day event Lettenbichler became the first rider to win the event on BMW machinery as it's normally dominated by KTM riders with the exception of last year when Sherco's Jarvis took a surprise victory.

There'd be no such luck for Grimbo in '09 though and after running near the front of the pack throughout the event the plucky multi-time British trials champion failed to finish when the electric system on his machine gave up the ghost. With Grimbo out of the equation the best Brit award went to Eurotek/FatCat rider Bolton who won the third off-road day outright but only finished fifth overall after having a bit of a 'mare on the final leg.

In the Hobby class for amateur riders the Blagg Roofing team of Richard Main, Keith Patstone and Darren Blagg finished the event in 14th place overall after five consistent days of riding through the Carpathian mountains.

For more results, images and video log on to www.redbullromaniacs.com



REMEMBER RICH

On September 27 the Halstead and District MCC will be laying on a race at Wakes Colne in memory of one of the club's most fondly remembered racers.

Richard Fitch's parents will be donating extra prize money and trophies for the top three in each class bearing Richard's name will be presented. There will also be spot prizes like tyres, oils and other various aftermarket equipment on offer.

So if you're up for racing in the same fun spirit as Richard used to and wish to enter call Sharon Foskew on 07950 479165.



Charlie Hollis is
still within striking
distance of the
MX1 title

AMCA UPDATE

BRAD AND LEE LEAD WITH TWO TO GO

Words and photo by Mike Wood

With the 2009 AMCA MX championships rapidly racing towards the business end of the season it's still Brad O'Leary and Lee Dunham who lead the MX1 and MX2 classes.

With two rounds remaining the MX1 class looks set to go right down to the wire as just a meagre 53 points separates the top four of O'Leary, Charlie Hollis, Ben Saunders and reigning champ David Campbell. Over in MX2 the immaculate Dunham is consistently stretching his advantage ahead of current champ Phil Mercer at the top of the points table. In all six rounds contested Dunham has been on the podium and barring disaster appears set to claim his first AMCA title.

In the last two MX1 rounds O'Leary, Saunders, Campbell and comeback rider Elliot Barrs have claimed the moto wins. However, at both Branton and Nympsfield Saunders has also suffered big crashes. Desperate to earn that elusive crown after being denied at the death in both 2007 and 2008, the Delkevic Kawasaki pilot will be looking to remain composed in the final two meetings – although overcoming a determined O'Leary will certainly be a big ask!

During the latest two rounds for the MX2 pilots at Nympsfield and Condrover, Dunham has scorched to four out of the six wins on offer. Victor on the remaining occasions has been fast-starting Yorkshireman Mark Hooley who along with Jack Taylor, Shane Holmes and Sean Frayne are currently disputing the number four spot in the championship standings.

Closest challengers to leader Dunham are Mercer and Matt Porter who are locked together on 807 points but with Mercer struggling with a damaged left ankle and knee ligaments he will do remarkably well to remain in contention.

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1 Brad O'Leary	<i>Proppa Gear 4 KTM</i>	830
2 Charlie Hollis	<i>Proppa Honda</i>	807
3 Ben Saunders	<i>Delkevic Kawasaki</i>	789
4 David Campbell	<i>Corby MX Kawasaki</i>	777
5 James Russell	<i>Homer Racing Honda</i>	710
6 Tim Truman	<i>Doodson Suzuki</i>	681
7 Jamie Powell	<i>KTM</i>	616
8 Rich Meakin	<i>Proppa Honda</i>	575
9 Brad Turner	<i>Ride MX Yamaha</i>	552
10 Danny Blakeley	<i>Silvesters Yamaha</i>	539

MX2 >>

1 Lee Dunham	<i>MotoXtreme Kawasaki</i>	941
2 Phil Mercer	<i>Delkevic Kawasaki</i>	807
3 Matt Porter	<i>Select Homes Honda</i>	807
4 Mark Hooley	<i>Craigs Motorcycles KTM</i>	664
5 Sean Frayne	<i>Honda</i>	643
6 Shane Holmes	<i>Ride MX KTM</i>	604
7 Jack Taylor	<i>Proppa Gear 4 KTM</i>	601
8 Paul Neale	<i>Kawasaki</i>	565
9 Scott Mathia	<i>Doodson Suzuki</i>	560
10 Shaun Pearce	<i>Pete Jones Honda</i>	492



GORDON CROCKARD

STILL PUSHING!

HE'S HAD HIS TOUGHEST SEASON EVER BUT THE CROCK STAR'S NOT GOING TO GIVE UP UNTIL THE FAT LADY SINGS...

Words by Gordon Crockard Photo by Sutty

So by the end of this month of September I will be finished racing for 2009. The only outings planned for over the winter are the Future West events that are the World Indoor Endurocross at Sheffield and the SX series running two rounds at the NEC and then Liverpool and London in January 2010. I'm a little sad about how this season has gone for me and I honestly can say that I am looking forward to having another chance in 2010 to reach the goals I set for this season.

Since returning from injury I have progressed at a steady upward rate in the results. Looking at the British championship it started with 14-14 at Lyng, then 12-8 at Foxhill and then 6-DNS at Duns. The second race at Duns was cancelled due to extremely wet weather. I would have liked there to be a second race as I reckoned I could have improved on my first race placing. There is only one round remaining at Landrake and it is my next chance to improve on my season best so far.

To be a tad negative for a moment, I can tell you that my reward for putting myself through the challenge of returning to race this year hasn't been paid yet. I feel I will only gain from this year's efforts when I start to race in 2010. I have faith in myself that it will come good and I will get what I want. I believe in myself. Why else would I be doing this? Of course, there is a chance that I won't get what I want as this '09 season has demonstrated quite well. But I've learnt from that so perhaps those chances of failure are less.

It's funny, I still think I'm Superman. I have had a mindset fault for years where I think that I can do whatever I want and I pay zero attention to how much energy I have to do it. I don't

respect being tired. I ignore it and I run myself into the ground and end up sick. I did this recently to quite an extent.

I went on a bit of a mountain bike expedition and bonked/hit the wall/sucked the rabbit/body bagged etc. That was on the Thursday, then I raced three motos on a bone-shaker 1980 465cc Yamaha on the Friday. Saturday I then raced three motos on my 450 Honda, got the ferry that night and arrived at Hawkstone for 8am Sunday morning. Raced two motos that day and got the ferry that night which got me home for 7.30am on Monday morning. I got the flu on Tuesday and was fit for nothing for two weeks. No training or riding. The fact I have no spleen is an additional reason why I should take things easier. So I will try my best from now on to leave my Superman outfit in the wardrobe.

It was such a shame it rained at Duns. The track looked mega before the rain came. I really hope we have a round there next year. The race was hard to enjoy as my eyes were in pain with all the grit and muck in them. I couldn't really see very well and that was making getting close to the rider in front of me difficult. You only get one set of eyes in this life and I do my part to look after mine as best I can. I got sixth in the race and fourth was looking possible at times so I was satisfied with how it went.

The last three weeks of rain have made practising a bit difficult. I'm sure you have all been wishing for the summer to sort itself out. I am proper solar-powered and I do get affected by the climate. Mainly because it makes it so hard to plan ahead and get out on the bike. Maybe I should move away to the Sunshine State? Why not, eh?





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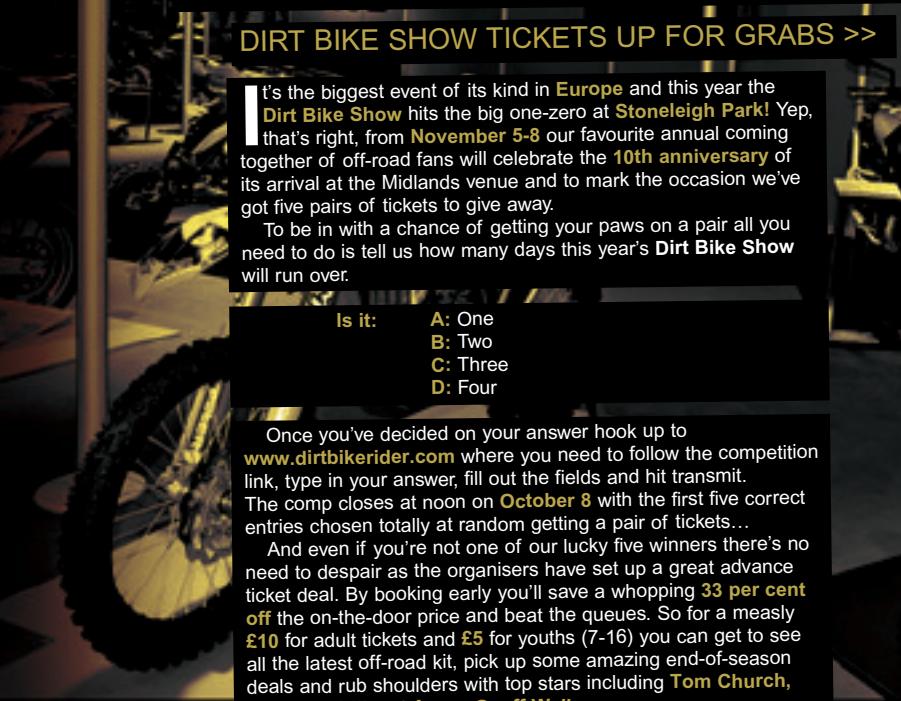
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STEPHEN SWORD

CHAMPION!

IT'S BEEN A TOUGH SEASON FOR SWORDY BUT THE BRITISH MX2 TITLE HAS PUT A SMILE BACK ON HIS FACE

Words by Stephen Sword Photo by Sutty

This month has been great regarding the British championship. Yep, I am the MX2 British champion and could not be happier to get my fourth title. It has been a s**t year regarding the GPs but wrapping up the British has ended my season on a high.

I have always enjoyed doing the British as you get to see the British supporters and get a real sense of their loyalty to all the riders. I have only ever ridden in Scotland once before so getting the title there was great. No-one knew I had won it at first as they got all the points wrong so the team and myself were busy celebrating and no-one else had a clue. Once it was sorted out I was on the podium and could not have been happier. What a great ending to a year full of ups and downs.

I went to stay at my dad's that night and we all got food in and celebrated which was nice. My dad is my biggest fan and his support throughout all the years has been amazing so thanks dad. Ayrton and Jodie were there to see me take the title – it was a great day for us all and one I will never forget.

I have to mention the MX des Nations – this hasn't shocked me as I've always had to fight my corner to ride the Nations. Even when I was fourth in the world in '04 I wasn't picked and had to take the matter further in order to get a ride. I have ridden the 450 this year for the Red Bull Pro Nationals and felt that I was fast and on it considering I'd only ridden it once before that race and then not again until the Ken Hall where I won all three races with a good lead.

So I'm going to finish the last British on the 450 and I'm looking forward to seeing the results as they will answer a lot of questions that everyone is asking. I am gutted I have not been picked, let's hope now that we get a Scottish team as I think me, Billy and Shaun could do well and we would definitely have a strong squad.

I rode well at the Ken Hall on the 450 – especially considering I have only ridden the bike three times this year. The second race I fell off in a corner and I've got to say I did panic with the electric start but after a few attempts it

started again. I only had a lap to go and went from third to first in that time. The other two races I won with a good lead. Archie was my mechanic for the day so I bet he was stressing when I dropped it but it all turned out good. I also had my good mate Pecker and young Irwin helping me on the day. I am really enjoying riding the bigger bike again and cannot wait for next season already.

The new age rule is coming in next year and I am definitely up for a change by moving to the bigger bike – when I'm riding the 450 I feel good and I'm enjoying being on it far more than the 250 which is weird for me as I've always thought of myself as an MX2 rider. Roger has been great by getting the bigger bike sorted out for me last-minute and supporting me throughout the year with all my ups and downs so I was pleased I was able to achieve the British championship for him and the team. Wayne my mechanic was relieved and thanks mate, you've given so much time and hard work this year so I'm glad we did it.

I'm not going to Brazil as I'm not fighting for a place in the championship so there was really no point. It's mad but I'm not going to be on a MX2 bike again and I have to be honest and say I'm over it though and am now really looking forward to the change. I will be doing the last British and possibly the Weston Beach Race and that is my season over so I can rest and then get focused for next year. I am determined to end this year on a high and have a good ride at the last British to show what's in store next year!

I would like to say a big thank you to Mike and Paula Church for their support this season, they have always helped me and gave me some wise words throughout the year. Without them I would not be where I am today and their kindness means so much to me. A big thank you to all my fans, you guys have been fantastic as always.

Anyway, that's it for yet another month and I am going to sign off as the 2009 British MX2 champion!

Braaaaaap #7 (#1)



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DAVID VUILLEMIN

HE RECKONS THAT FRENCHMEN ARE BETTER LOVERS THAN THEIR ENGLISH COUNTERPARTS BUT WILL DV12 STILL FEEL THE SAME WAY AFTER A LONG, LOVING DBR PROBING?

Words and photo by JP O'Connell



Q: My dad says he thinks you beat Ricky Carmichael – is he right?

Stuart Bugler, Age 11, Cirencester.

A: "Yes, your dad is right. I beat Ricky a few times in the early 2000s in SX and MX. We had a good battle for the SX championship back in 2002. RC is, by the way, the rider I respect the most!"

Q: After years of riding factory machinery has it been difficult getting used to a more 'standard' bike?

Simon Dixon, Ipswich.

A: "Standard bikes are way better these days compared to 10 years ago. In SX with the two-strokes the difference was big especially when the unleaded fuel law arrives. With the 450 the engine is good stock and it's easier to bolt cams, a high compression piston, do the gearing and you are pretty much set to go. The biggest thing is suspension – especially in SX. In MX I got two fourth overalls in the US with stock suspensions. That wouldn't be possible in SX. To answer your question, the machinery is important but for people that race in front. A factory bike wouldn't qualify a guy that never made a Main Event in supercross in his career."

Q: Who's the best team-mate you've ever had?

Martin Reynolds, Sherborne

A: "He wasn't my real team-mate but it was like it. It was Ernesto Fonseca. He was riding Yamaha of Troy bikes back in the days when I was a Yamaha Factory rider. We would ride, train, ride bicycle and play tennis together without being against each other on the weekends because we weren't in the same class. It was a lot of fun."

Q: Is it true that Frenchmen make better lovers than Englishmen?

Rachel & Vicki, Weymouth

A: "It's tough to say because I never been with a girl that has been with a English guy before... As a cocky French guy I would say sure!"

Q: Will you be riding the British SX series next year?

Ben Frith, Swansea

A: "I doubt I will be racing the British series. That might be fun though. I have to see with my manager, who is British, if it is a possibility. I raced Sheffield SX a few years ago and had a blast! Maybe I could go see a Premier League game at the same time..."

Q: You must have raced on hundreds of tracks in all corners of the world but which is your favourite?

Ryan Holmes, Christchurch

A: "I still think Asti, Italy, is a great track where I have a lot of fun. You always like the track you've

done good but I never raced Asti... In the US I like Budds Creek and Hangtown."

Q: Where did the nickname Cobra come from?

Leo Harris, Bristol

A: "Cobra came in the picture in 1997. The French announcer of Bercy SX which does a lot of French events gave me this nickname because I had a weird riding style, I was moving a lot on the bike and was always catching people from bad starts. He came up with the Cobra..."

Q: If you could change one career decision that you've made, what would it be?

Jamie Webb, Kent

A: "I would have not made the photoshoot I got hurt at when I was leading the SX championship in 2002. I just wanted to see if I could have had the championship... I was 20 points ahead of RC after eight SXs."

Q: How does Bercy compare to the US?

Tony Welsh, Tonbridge

A: "Bercy is the biggest French race. It's important for the French people and also for French riders. All the French kids dream about winning that race but it's nothing like winning a US Supercross. US SX is the Formula 1 of our sport..."

Q: Did you think you would be doing better in the GPs than you are?

Dave Bates, Swanage

A: "I thought I would. I think I trained hard this winter in Europe and in the US. I think we were a little behind with the bike development and it showed at some races. There are races where I also didn't ride well and races I was hurt. All of this mixed together gives a so-so year..."

Q: Which has been the best bike you've campaigned during your career and what was so good about it?

Kevin Bridgewater

A: "No doubt it would be the '00-'01-'02 YZ250. That bike was great. Great engines, we would start in the front always. Great chassis and great suspension. Back in the early 2000 the whoops were insane and we were only a few to blast them. Our bike was so good in them, we would shift to fourth gear and that was it."

Q: After so long in the US have you lost your appreciation of good food!?

Greg Turner, Reigate

A: "Not really. I think you can eat really good in the US. There are a bunch of great places to eat there... There aren't only burger places!"

Q: Do you have to practice/train differently for the GPs than you did for the Nationals?

Tom Nicholls, London

A: "It's not really different. I rode a lot more in the sand than I did when I was in the US. I trained with Jacky Vimond. The motos in GPs are five minutes longer but it's not a big change."

Q: You seem to have been racing forever, how long is left and what do you plan on doing when you retire?

Justin Mortimer, Newcastle

A: "I am not sure how long I am going to race still. I think the end is coming really quick. I'd love to stay in the industry to share my experience and knowledge to help riders or teams getting better results."

Q: Of all the races you've won which are you most proud of?

Paul Woodland, Manchester

A: "I always wanted to win SX races in the premium class... I did it seven times [as much as Jeff Emig] and I am proud of all of them!"



JAMES STEWART

NEXT MONTH'S PRO TO BE PROBED >>

At DBR we try to give you everything you ask for and for next month's Pro Probe we've managed to line up the one and only James Stewart! Get your questions in ASAP as time lines are tight. Usual address please – dbrproperprobe@googlemail.com

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Interviews by JP O'Connell Photos by Sutty

This month's bristly bag of man sauce comes from under the PAR Homes Honda awning where we hooked up with Ireland's very own Bionic Man and Tow Law's speedy Scrooge...

DBR: Who would you like to play you in a film of your life?

GC: "Joaquin Phoenix."

BA: "Probably Rocky Balboa."

DBR: When did you last clean an air filter?

GC: "Yesterday."

BA: "Last winter when we were doing the winter practices."

DBR: Could you check your own valve clearances?

GC: "Yes, definitely."

BA: "No, I'll leave that to the mechanic!"

DBR: Have you ever eaten anything that you've killed?

GC: "Yes, crab."

BA: "Ummm, only fish."

DBR: How many bones have you broken?

GC: "Oh yes! Two toes, two legs, two ribs, four vertebrae, 12 collarbones, two fingers, one wrist, one elbow, one nose!"

BA: "Quite a few – six or seven I think."

DBR: Can you eat spaghetti without a spoon?

GC: "Oh yes, no problem."

BA: "Yes."

DBR: Something you eat that you know you shouldn't?

GC: "Bread and cheese."

BA: "McDonalds – does that count?"

DBR: Do you own a pair of slippers?

GC: "Yes, they are Guinness pints."

BA: "Yes, some nice furry slip-on ones!"

DBR: You're in second and on the leader's rear wheel – do you take him out in the last corner for the win?

GC: "Yes, if the win is worth it I'm afraid I would. Depends on certain factors."

BA: "Definite, aye. You've got to if it's for the win."

DBR: What's the highlight of your career so far?

GC: "GP win at Genk in Belgium in 2001. Pichon was second and we were one minute and 30 seconds ahead

of third place and lapped up to ninth place."

BA: "Winning British rounds this year. I mean, I won Lyng last year but that was just lucky. Also having the crowd behind you at the British GP."

DBR: What car do you drive?

GC: "High roof stretched Merc."

BA: "Golf TDi."

DBR: And if money were no object?

GC: "Bentley Sport with a bike rack."

BA: "Porsche 911 GT3."

DBR: Have you ever blamed a poor result on a non-existent 'mechanical issue'?

GC: "[Laughing] No, a non-existent rider issue maybe!"

BA: "Of course, everyone must have done that once in their life haven't they?"

DBR: Have you ever been arrested?

GC: "No."

BA: "Yes, drunk and disorderly...moving on!"

DBR: If you could change anything about yourself what would it be?

GC: "Probably the colour of my hair and I'd like to have my spleen back."

BA: "Not being so greedy with me money."

DBR: What's the most embarrassing thing you've done while drunk?

GC: "Sorry, there's no chance I'm spilling my guts on this one. I would have no recovery to the opinion you would form of me if I said..."

BA: "I once ran over the top of a car – and it wasn't mine!"

DBR: If you could meet any person – dead or alive – who would it be?

GC: "George Best."

BA: "It would be cool to meet up with Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie."

DBR: If you were shipwrecked on an island what three things would you want with you?

GC: "My girlfriend, some sunglasses and a toothbrush."

BA: "My lass to look after us, me motorbike and a mechanic."

DBR: What's your favourite film?

GC: "Forest Gump/Snatch."

BA: "The Rocky films."

DBR: What's your most annoying habit?

GC: "I don't listen so good sometimes."

BA: "Picking me nose!"

DBR: Do you have any fears or phobias?

GC: "No."

BA: "No, not really."

DBR: What's your most prized possession?

GC: "My eyes."

BA: "My money."

DBR: Favourite race you've been in?

GC: "Talavera in 2000, I grabbed the holeshot and won the GP!"

BA: "The British GP this year."

DBR: Have you ever been in a fight?

GC: "Yes."

BA: "Loads!"

DBR: Is winning a race better than sex?

GC: "No."

BA: "Your first race win, yes."

DBR: How do you have your steak?

GC: "Rare."

BA: "Medium rare."

DBR: Blonde or brunette?

GC: "Blonde."

BA: "My lass was blonde but now she's brunette so either."

DBR: If you had to give up eating meat, the internet or your mobile phone for the rest of your life which would it be?

GC: "Mobile phone."

BA: "The internet."

DBR: Something about yourself that nobody else knows?

GC: "I am actually the Stig. Or I am allergic to wheat, dairy, gluten and yeast. Or I have no brothers, uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins, nieces or nephews."

BA: "I like to watch Deal or No Deal cause I'd like to be on it and gamble all the way!"



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HAT'S OFF TO NAT!

IT'S BEEN A ROUGH, TOUGH SEASON BUT NATALIE KANE'S BECOME THE FIRST IRISH RIDER SINCE GORDON CROCKARD IN 2001 TO WIN A FIM MX BRONZE MEDAL...

Words by Stevie Mills Photo by Sarah Gutierrez

Congratulations to Natalie Kane on securing the #3 world ranking – this young, hard working lass from down the road has earned her place on the world stage. Well done Nat – we're all delighted for you!

The final moto of the women's series was a full-on thriller and while the possibility of third place was a consideration, an injury sustained during a training session earlier in the week meant Natalie's hard-fought fourth place in the championship was also still hanging in the balance.

The fast-starting MVR-D rider blitzed to the front of the final race of the GP calendar and she was able to hang with newly-crowned champion Steffi Laier for several laps. But it was in the final quarter of the race that she was to showcase to the world her pure grit and determination – qualities held in abundance by the Irish girl. I am sure, like me, everyone that watched the final few laps of that moto were on the edge of their seats. Wobble as she did on several occasions, Natalie brought home the bacon for MVR-D Suzuki, Ireland and every girl motocrosser in the British Isles.

Newly-crowned Irish MX2 champion Stuart Edmonds has gone into the history books as the first Southern Centre licence holder to take an Irish Premier class title south of the Boyne. Based in Dublin, the TM-mounted charger has lifted his game to the next level, winning local races and becoming a regular top 12 points scorer in the Maxxis series. He has earned his

spot in the des Nations team.

Speaking of the des Nations squad, joining young Edmonds (MX1) on the Italian trip will be Martin Barr (MX2) and Graeme Irwin (MX3) – which may prove interesting! Ireland will also field an U21 squad for the Coupe de l'Avenir which takes place in Belgium on October 17/18. Vastly experienced team manager Trevor Callaghan has named his troops – Edward Allingham, Graeme Irwin and Jason Garrett.

It was great to have Scotland on the Brit MX calendar, despite the appalling weather. An exceptionally-prepped circuit was literally falling apart during the first MX2 moto which was duly won by the returning-to-work Shaun Simpson – welcome back mate! But little could have dampened the mood in the KTM UK camp as fellow Scotsman Stephen Sword got his mittens on another British title which makes it a double for Roger Magee's camp.

Barr also seemed at home in the treacherous conditions and claimed third on the day (it's an Irish weather thing). I'm sure Martin was upset with the second moto being cancelled as he continues to close in on that third place in the points table. Recording the fourth fastest time in his class, Irwin could only muster 11th place as he crossed the line a little worse for wear, still feeling the effects of his bout of flu. Gordon Crockard also enjoyed a successful mud plugging experience at Duns – the Crock Star was well-versed for this type of going after winning the Carrick club's grasstrack series in

very similar conditions.

The aforementioned grasstrack series was a resounding success, despite the best efforts of the untimely monsoon season which visited all three of the 'summer' events. So well done to Ryan, Davy and the many hands-on members of the new, effective and capable Carrick crew – let's hope their efforts are rewarded with a round of the Ulster/Irish championships in 2010.

Gordon won the series overall and I would think that this particular trophy will have a significant position in the GC silverware cabinet as a mark of his remarkable journey back to health. Second place was just reward for the efforts of Stephen Kelly while Drew Goudy filled out the podium in a series that attracted such names as Barr, Irwin, Merton, Kane and Ulster's WSB racer Jonathan Rea who, by the way, finished second to Gordy at round two.

Stuart Edmonds may have his name on the Irish MX2 crown but there's much to fight for in the remaining domestic championship standings with Garrett, Bird and Merton fighting over the two remaining podium spots. And Edmonds holds a 12-point advantage over Garrett in the MX1 class with Gary Gibson and Tommy Merton still in the hunt.

Dundalk Moto Park will host the final round of the Irish season and has always provided close racing. Although it's a hard pack circuit the venue can take rain with ease – hmm, I probably shouldn't have written that!

Stevie
dirtbikerider 25

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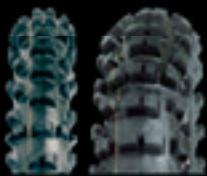


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ORIOL MENA AND JOHNNY AUBERT HAVE ALREADY PUT THEIR NAMES TO WORLD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES IN '09 AND MIKA AHOLA AND IVAN CERVANTES SHOULD BE NEXT

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

It's been a funny old year as far as the World Enduro Championship is concerned. There's been despair and delight in equal measure – and that's just within the BMW Motorrad team – and more than a few surprises along the way, too.

But now all is more or less said and done the riders who have ended the season as winners – and those who will likely wrap up their crowns at the final round in France – are those who were safe bets some six months ago. They weren't necessarily the obvious choices for title winners but they were certainly riders you wouldn't have bet against.

The Enduro 2 class is where the most fun and games has taken place this season. The 'premier' class as far as the WEC series is concerned, '09 was set to be a head-to-head between KTM and BMW, between Juha Salminen and Johnny Aubert. With Aubert defending his first-ever world crown, Salminen wanted to prove himself a winner once again having, in part, been robbed of a record-breaking eighth world championship last year by a desperately unlucky mechanical breakdown.

But that was just the start of things. The big battle as the beginning of the '09 season loomed was between KTM – the dominant player in the WEC for many a year – and BMW, the German new boys who built themselves a 'dream team' having decided the time was right to launch an all-out assault on the WEC. In winning each and every one of the first 13 days of competition in the E2 class, Johnny Aubert proved many things. That he was a worthy title winner in '08. That he thoroughly deserved to be crowned champion again in '09. And that he is already one of the WEC's all-time greats. BMW weren't quite as ready as they thought, or hoped, which meant that Aubert spent the entire first half of the season running away with things.

What happened at round seven of the WEC is something that no-one could have scripted at the start of the season. Aubert claimed a comfortable win on day one – nothing new there really – but with the E2 world championship war won then lost the battle for a seventh straight double class win. He was the world champion but due to an injured finger was unable to finish day two.

That left the door open for someone else to top the E2 class. A first as far as the '09 championship was concerned. And three riders stepped forward as willing and capable candidates. Juha Salminen aboard his much-improved factory BMW. Spaniard Cristobal Guerrero, the super-fast dry weather specialist who on more than a few occasions this season had already showed many of the factory-backed riders where to go. And last but by no means least David Knight! On a Kawasaki! In E2! The rider that returned to the WEC from the US GNCC scene with BMW made his, well, second return to the series riding green.

Salminen eventually claimed the day win, handing BMW the elusive WEC victory they had been working hard to achieve. Guerrero placed second and Knight third. With no Aubert, with a BMW on the top step and with Knight giving Kawasaki a place on a WEC podium, the day two E2 class top three in Greece was spectacularly different to any other this year.

With one round remaining only injury or

Johnny Aubert celebrates winning the E2 world crown



mechanical catastrophe will prevent Mika Ahola claiming the '09 Enduro 1 and Ivan Cervantes the Enduro 3 world championship titles. If all goes to plan Mika, the defending class champion, will have proved himself as not only a late bloomer – he raced for 10 years without putting his name to a WEC title – but also as one of the very best. With this looking likely to be his third consecutive title he's taken on and beaten most all of the recent enduro greats – Knight and Salminen apart. Husqvarna's Antoine Meo might have eclipsed Ahola in recent events but at the start of the season, when other riders

were struggling to find either their form or consistency, Mika was stringing together some impressive results.

Ivan Cervantes will also be a deserved title winner providing nothing untoward happens in France. Coming into the '09 WEC season with his confidence sky high after topping the Indoor Enduro World Cup, the flamboyant Spaniard has battled hard against Frenchmen Christophe Nambotin and Seb Guillaume and has come out on top. Even when things weren't going his way Ivan hung on in there, the true mark of a deserved champion.



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AMCA ANGER!

What on earth is up with the AMCA? They continually rave about the amount of members they have but they do nothing to take care of them. Tracks are rapidly being lost, the office never replies to phone calls or emails and meetings are cancelled when the track's apparently water-logged four days before a meeting. This was truly the final blow.

After the meeting was cancelled we had beautiful weather for a few days and every practice track in the country was open so why not one of the AMCA's very own tracks, or as usual did the club due to run this event just shirk the responsibility for organising it for not the first time in the last couple of years? The AMCA need to assign a riders' representative from each club/group and listen to them for a change. For some motocross is a way of life every week, can they not see this? What happened to the good old days when the meetings were run rain or shine?

For the final bitching, they need to look at the way they undertake group championships. Members are only allowed to race at Hawkstone Park if they hold a gold licence, the same should apply to the championships. As usual it's the end of the season and all the trophy hunters and blaggers are coming out of the woodwork. AMCA look at the bigger picture and listen to the those riders that you supposedly represent.

Motocross Widow, via email

UNFAIR ADVANTAGE?

I'd just like to start off by saying what a great magazine you produce for everyone but especially us youngsters! I was watching a programme the other day – the British Masters – and it was showing the BW/SW class.

Lately me and my dad have been talking about how much difference in power there is with the 150s when they have had a fair bit of money spent on them compared to a two-smoker. It got me thinking, could it be said to be an unfair advantage? Seeing as some kids have thousands of pounds worth of bike does this give them the edge in winning races? I personally think it does as seeing some of these 150s screaming down the straights compared to the two-strokes there's an unbelievable difference. Just thought I'd write in and see on your thoughts about it!

Danny, Dagenham

A good point well made Danny! In MX so much is down to rider skills which is one of the greatest aspects of the sport but it is a motorsport and money can buy results – it would be the same if you put a tricked-out 250F against a stock 250F if the riders were equally matched...

KNIGHT FRIGHT!

A few weeks ago I decided to enter my first motocross race. A schoolboy club organised an adult support race so I thought it would be an ideal first race to get into the swing of motocross. I drove up and over the Manx hills that morning feeling refreshed and excited. This feeling died a little when I pulled up to the gate and saw a giant of a man – compared to my 5ft 4ins – straddling a slick-looking Kawasaki only three gates away from me.

It was the one and only David Knight! A world champion enduro rider racing an utter novice! When the gate dropped he, of course, disappeared. That was until he passed me just two laps later – his tyres were at my head height over a set of rhythm jumps which he just decided to clear in one. Absolutely incredible! And that was only one of the many times he passed me during the three races that day.

Andy, Isle of Man

Don't despair Andy – the big fella makes a habit of passing people so you're in good company! And how many other riders can claim to have lined up against Knighter in their very first race?

IRISH RACER

Hi, loving the mag – every time I read it it just gets better! I'm 12 years old and only started riding last year. I'm still on the Yamaha SW80cc and I'm looking in the mag to see if there are any tips on how to get back in the groove again.

Before I got off for the summer holidays I was doing great – two hours out on the track after school, getting up in mid-air and picking up my speed. This was all so great. But then the track was to be re-built and made better. The 'made better' bit was not a problem but while it was happening I was only riding round a field with no jumps and no bumps and as most riders know it was not the same.

Then it was a dry evening and we all went out to put in a few laps. Well the jump I went over felt really weird. I just could not get the slightest bit of air. So if you've any tips put them in the next issue of the mag!

My goal is to race some day and somehow turn pro – sure, I probably didn't start young enough but somehow Livia Lancelot I'll catch you so watch out for a jersey with the letters REID on it!

Stephanie, N Ireland

Our immediate advice is practice, practice, practice Stephanie but don't worry about starting late – you've got plenty of time to get up to speed. And once you've got onto Livia's pace you'll have to up it again if you want to catch Natalie Kane who's just going to get faster and faster...

DYNAMITE DUNS!

Hey to you all at DBR, thought I'd take the time to email in and say that although it's taken me the best part of a week to dry out what a day I had at Duns at the Maxxis round and what a joy to see the boys go hard at it even if it was wetter than an otter's pocket! It was great to see Billy and Shaun back in the saddle and still rapid! Well done Ando on the win and Sutty for braving the rain and not heading for the Maxxis bus!

Ian, Melrose

Even now, nearly two weeks later, Sutty's still dripping – although that could be down to his incontinence!

LATE BLOOMER

I'm new to motocross riding and not really a spring chicken (aged 29). I've been riding now for five weeks on local pits and wasteland on my 2002 RM250 (first bike) and I'm looking into doing a bit of racing.

So me and a couple of mates decided to have a practice day at Mallory Park. What an eye-opener – I'd highly recommend this to anyone who hasn't been on a proper track. It was an awesome day but for three days after I could hardly walk or bend. My legs and back have been killing me.

Is there anything I can take or do to help with the recovery? I've heard of bodybuilders taking creatine to help their muscles repair quicker and speed up recovery times but I'm unsure if this would work. Please let me know what you think.

Martyn, Derbyshire

Welcome aboard mate – you've left it a bit late but, still, better late than never! Top riders always make sure they warm-up before and also warm-down afterwards – a gentle post-ride session on a static bike will help sort out the lactic acid in your muscles. We'd also highly recommend you hook up to www.iso2nutrition.co.uk and check out their products – the Complete Recovery especially is the cojones! Finally, it's vital that you only ride where you're allowed to as illegal riding is a real threat to the sport. Have fun!

VILLA FAN!

Before I start I'd just like to say what an awesome mag, keep up the good work! On August 22 I had the best night of my life watching the Red Bull X-Fighters, I can't believe how much more awesome it is in real life than watching it on the internet or TV. Andre Villa is the fittest guy ever and the most stylish on two wheels – if you're reading this Andre i'm single!

Ady, Northampton

This isn't dateline ginger spuds face dude face!

**GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?**

WELL HERE'S WHERE YOU SHOULD BE SAYING IT...

Write to Rant at the usual address or email us at rant@dirtbikerider.co.uk. All letters/emails must be accompanied by a full address. Oh and please don't send emails all in capitals. Cheers!

LETTERS WIN PRIZES

Write to Rant, get your letter published and you'll win a one-litre trigger bottle of marvellous bike cleaning fluid Muc-Off. And if we rate your letter highly enough you'll also receive our star prize – this month a pair of Etnies Digit shoes.





THOR

LTD EDITION ROCKSTAR CHAD REED REPLICA KIT

There's no denying that two-time AMA SX champ – and now AMA MX champ – Chad Reed is a real bad-ass on a motocross bike and the Rockstar Suzuki rider certainly gave James Stewart a run for his money in this year's supercross championship, only missing out on the W by a handful of points.

Speaking of which, if you saw any of this year's AMA SX rounds on TV or the internet you'll have seen that Reed's all-new Thor kit was something a little bit special.

If you love the look of Chad's kit as much as we do then you'll be glad to know that Madison are bringing very limited quantities of it into the UK so you too can look like the Thunder from Down Under. Check the range out online at www.madison.co.uk right now or scoot along to your local dealer for an even quicker fix!

Price: Pants £139.99 Jersey £49.99
Supplier: [madison.co.uk](http://www.madison.co.uk)
Contact: 0870 034 7226

GET

MD5 GPS LAP TIMER

Global Electronic Technologies (GET) have been working closely with many of the factory MX teams in the GP world for the last year or so with Teka Suzuki in particular exploiting the system to gain the very best from their bikes and riders. And now you can get your hands on similar technology with the MD5 GPS CHRONO lap timer and data acquisition system.

This easy to use system is able to use GPS technology to time your laps without the need for any trackside sensors and will create a map of the circuit you're riding to give overall and intermediate timing as well as logging RPM so you can see exactly where and when you were on the gas and where you're over-revving the motor etc. It's all fascinating stuff and you can expect a full feature on the system in DBR just as soon as we've figured how to get the best from it.

Price: from £432
Supplier: [getuk.co.uk](http://www.getuk.co.uk)
Contact: 01865 823260

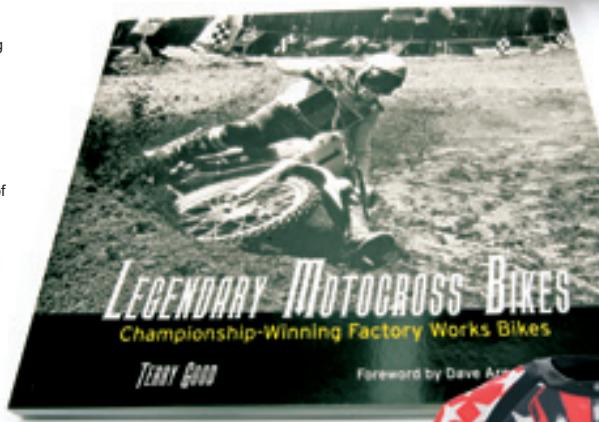


TAG METALS

T2 HANDLEBARS

Handlebars are an integral part of any rider's success with the correct amount of bend and flex being all-important. That's why AMA supercross champion James Stewart will only run these Tag Metals T2 handlebars on his Yamaha race machine. Forged from aircraft quality 7049 T-6 aluminium and then shot peened for even better durability these double-buttressed T2s are both light and strong which makes them a quality bit of kit to go chasing championships with.

Price: £69.95
Supplier: [rushracing.co.uk](http://www.rushracing.co.uk)
Contact: 01404 549696



MOTORBOOKS

LEGENDARY MOTOCROSS BIKES BOOK

You can't beat reading a good book unless of course you just enjoy looking at the pictures in which case this Legendary Motocross Bikes book has you totally covered whatever your mood. Jam-packed with 20 fantastic race machines from around the world including Sten Lundin's Monark, Torsten Hallman's YZ637 and Eric Geboers' RC500C – the last of the true factory 500cc Hondas – this 160-page full-colour book is an absolutely must-have for the motocross fan...

Price: £18.99
Supplier: [dirtbikerider.com](http://www.dirtbikerider.com)
Contact: 01524 834066



SHIFT RACING

FACTION RACEWEAR

At some point in life you've got to push the boundaries of what seems like acceptable behaviour and whether it's smogging the face off your bosses' favourite niece in a windswept car park or dressing in something a little risqué then it has to be done. That's where the new range of Faction racewear comes in – it's awesomely constructed, lasts forever and fits like a glove but do you have the balls to wear something so bold?

Available in three styles – the electrifying black, redneck red/black (featured) and also blue, red and yellow – there's something to suit all tastes and sizes so get your groove on down to your favourite Fox/Shift emporium and check it out today!

Price: TBC
Supplier: [shifteurope.com](http://www.shifteurope.com)
Contact: 0191 487 6100



FRANK INDUSTRIES

CLEAR ADVANTAGE VISOR

If you've always wondered where top factory racers like two-time world champion Steve Ramon get their trick peak extenders from then wonder no more because the Clear Advantage Visor is now available in the UK for mere mortals like us to buy. Easily installed in a matter of minutes the perfectly clear CAV extends your peak by a good few inches offering your goggles added protection from flying roost and falling rain.

Price: £13.99

Supplier: GOMX Distribution

Contact: 02892 699770



RENTHAL

INTELLILEVER

Manufactured using the same principles as the similarly named clutch version that's already a top seller, the Intellilever brake lever is able to pivot up, down, forwards and all angles inbetween in the event of a crash. The lever blade itself is machined from 6082 billet aluminium and then hard anodized for increased durability which pretty much makes it impossible to snap or bend...

Price: £58.70

Supplier: renthal.com

Contact: CI Sport 01372 378000



BROWN CORPORATION

PLOO BOX

The Ploo is a lightweight portable cardboard toilet that as Bingo puts it is perfect 'for anyone who doesn't like pooing in fields'. The Ploo transforms from a convenient flat pack into a rigid, reusable toilet and comes with degradable poo bags so you can use it again and again and again. The best bit though is that when you've finished whatever it is you were using your Ploo box for in the privacy of wherever, provided it's still dry and undamaged it will be sturdy enough to support the weight of a dirt bike – provided it weighs less than 127kgs of course. Killer!

Price: £15.67

Supplier: thebrown corporation.com

Contact: 0116 298 7656

GSPMX

ALLY STOOL STAND

It's not normally too easy to get excited about a bike stand but when it's a bike stand that's well made, good looking and super-light like this ally GSP one then I guess it's a little less difficult. Made in the Midlands by those eccentric engineers at GSP MX HQ this ally stool stand is available right now at a bargain price and unlike some other stool stand manufacturers' offerings the rubber grip mat found on this one ain't gonna drop off as soon as it sniffs a little petrol...

Price: £44.99

Supplier: gspmx.com

Contact: 01257 544504



FOX RACING

F3R BOOTS

The awesome championship winning F3 boot has now evolved into the even awesomer 2010 Fox F3R which is alleged to be the awesomest MX boot ever seen. Within the proven Biomorphic Chassis™ improvements include a 12mm lower toe box for improved shift lever feel, more pliable construction geometry for enhanced interconnectivity between bike and rider and the use of the most durable materials available. Basically speaking in layman's terms with the new F3R you get the best fitting, most durable boot ever made.

Price: TBC

Supplier: foxracing.com

Contact: 0191 487 6100



FRANK INDUSTRIES

BAR BUZZ KILL

Bar Buzz Kill is a simple and effective vibration dampening system that's easily squirted inside any handlebar. The inert gel never hardens so remains effective at killing motor buzz for the lifetime of the bars in question reducing hand and arm fatigue...

Price: £28.99

Supplier: GOMX Distribution

Contact: 02892 699770

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TA-TA TONY!

After years of faithful service to the DBR cause that have seen him ride and rate all the latest production machines – plus a large helping of factory exotica – for well over a decade, our chief test rider Tony Marshall has finally decided to call it a day. Next month we'll be running a special tribute to Tone, looking back at his racing career and quizzing him on his highs and lows as the UK's foremost motocross test rider..

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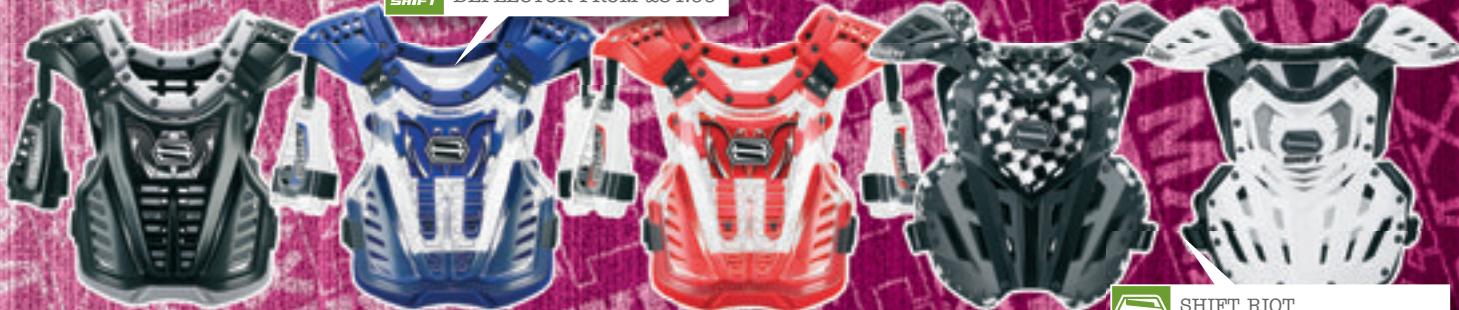
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STAR MAKER!

IN ALMOST 20 YEARS AT THE SHARP END OF BRITISH AND WORLD MOTOCROSS, STEVE DIXON'S MADE A HABIT OF MOULDING RAW TALENTS INTO GP WINNERS. WE CAUGHT UP WITH HIM AT HIS HAMPSHIRE HQ AND, EVEN BETTER, THEN GOT TO LET JEFF PERRETT LOOSE ON ZACH OSBORNE'S YZ250F...

Words and photos by JP O'Connell

Anyone who's attended a GP or British championship round during the last 20 years will have come across Steve Dixon's UTAG Yamaha squad or one of its previous incarnations – the team is like a piece of comfy paddock furniture it's been around for so long!

During a recent chat with Steve he asked us whether we'd like to take a tour around his fully-prepped race shop and, come to think of it, maybe take the race bikes for an exclusive test? Obviously, this was a complete no-brainer and five minutes later we'd fired off a text to Jeff Perrett telling him to start weeing on his fairy soft hands in preparation.

Team owner Steve's passion for mechanics and motocross goes right back to when he was 12 when his dad bought him a car and taught him how to strip it down. Steve took an apprenticeship in welding with the Eastleigh Railway Works and worked there from '80-'89, also qualifying in metallurgy.

At 17 Steve got a Maico 440 that allowed him to put his mechanical skills to good use.

"Mechanics were a passion – they had to be if you had a Maico," he laughs. "I was renowned for doing mechanics at the races. At one meeting the main bearing went so between races I stripped and replaced it right there on the ground with this big crowd watching! I think I got more of a buzz with the mechanical side than I did from riding – I always had the fastest bike and would usually pull the holeshot. As a rider I was pretty scary and would usually end up about 10th."

Knowing that his future was in spannering, Steve was on the look-out for work. A friend of his was a fan of Mervyn Anstie and knew that Merv the Swerve was looking for a new mechanic so Steve went for the interview and got the nod.

"Another friend of mine, Steve Goodyear, was leaving Yamaha and he heard I was thinking of going with Anstie," remembers Dixon. "Steve suggested that if I wanted to be a GP mechanic I should apply to Roger Harvey for his old job as Merv had something of a reputation as being a bit of a wild canon!"

Harvey knew of Dixon's background and gave

him the job as Jeremy Whatley's mechanic for the 1990 season, marking the start of Steve's association with Yamaha UK. But that initial hook-up wasn't to last long as Dixon left Yamaha after only one season and moved to Honda for the next two years with Craig Pratley. "I really liked the kid's hunger, his attitude," Steve says. "That was what I wanted to be working with, a passion that matched my own."

Steve's passion meant that for the '92 season he was spannering for both Craig Pratley and team-mate Neil Sheppard, working from 6am until midnight as between them they were campaigning nine different bikes!

In '93 Dixon switched back to Yamaha UK as Paul Malin's mechanic and has been there ever since. The '94 season wasn't so great for Malin and, in what Steve considers to be one of his proudest moments, he suggested that he build a 125 for Malin to try and get des Nations selection. The rest is history as Malin gelled with the bike, got picked for the team and went 1-1 –





ahead of Jeff Emig – in his class and Team GB famously took the Chamberlain Trophy back from the Americans.

At the end of '94 Roger Harvey left Yamaha and Dixon became Team Co-ordinator/Chief Mechanic, taking control of the day-to-day running of what was, essentially, the first incarnation of the UTAG team. The '95 season was a good one, the highlight being Malin's British 125GP win at a packed Foxhill. The 1996 season was also good with the addition of Cadbury Boost as title sponsor and Malin won the British championship as well as finishing second in the world.

From 1990-'98 the team was 100 per cent funded by Yamaha UK but for '99 Dixon wanted

to sign another rider. Yamaha agreed but funding would have to come from outside sponsorship. Dixon was determined to make it happen and secured funding from Triple S Chains (part of Bike-It) and Tim Brinton Cars, allowing him to sign Carl Nunn as well as Billy MacKenzie.

At the end of '01 Yamaha UK decided to quit their world championship team and offered Dixon the job of Yamaha Motor Sport Co-ordinator for both the road race and motocross divisions. This wasn't what he was looking for...

"I was too committed and wanted to continue running the team," he says. "I explained this to Yamaha and they agreed I could but they committed to paying only my wages and providing the bikes and spares, all of the other

wages and costs would be down to me to fund from outside sponsorship."

After thinking it through Dixon made his decision and '02 saw Steve as owner/technician of the Yamaha UK motocross team, renamed the following year Yamaha UK Dixon Racing.

"It was essential to rebrand the team," says Dixon. "People were under the impression that the team was still fully funded by Yamaha UK and that we didn't really need any extra money which was far from the truth."

Due to injuries and certain other factors, '02 and '03 were lean years compared to what the team was used to and action needed to be taken. Bike-It, who had been providing support since '96, came onboard as title



PRO FILE

#119 MEL POCOCK >>

Age: 17

Dob: 19/07/92

Nickname: Ginge

Racing: 11 years

Lives: Ringmer, near Eastbourne

Achievements: "I won my first race at my home track on a 65cc, SW85cc I was fourth in the BYMX, BW85cc I broke my wrist but up to that point I was leading. At 14 I went up to the 250F and won the Elite championship, at 15 I qualified for my first GP and at 16 I scored my first GP points."

Ambition: "To be British and world champion."

MX hero: "I don't really have a hero but since the age of eight I've always trained, ridden and been around Tommy Searle so I've kind of idolized him, you know as someone I'd like to be like."

Favourite Simpsons character: "Krusty the Clown!"
Thoughts on UTAG: "Best team that I have been with, everything is spot on. The bike is exactly as I want it and need it every single time, the team is always behind me be it a good or bad day. Steve Dixon is excellent – he's one of a kind."



© Alex Hodgkinson



Zane Mumford, Ben Popperwell and Steve crack on with prep on a 250F

sponsor for '04 and the team bought a new truck as well as signing Andrew McFarlane to ride alongside MacKenzie. Results immediately improved with McFarlane soon notching up his first MX2 GP overall.

In 2008 the team was again re-branded with UTAG becoming title sponsor. UTAG is actually owned by Bike-It and is an ID tag that contains medical safety advice, emergency contact details, doctor details and photo ID among other info. The sponsors are vital to the survival of the team and after nearly 20 years in the game Dixon knows nothing can be taken for granted.

"This team is my job," he explains. "It has to work and I can't let it fail – this isn't a sideline for me or an expensive hobby, it is what pays the bills. This team runs on a budget of about £500K, of which over 90 per cent comes from our sponsors. We have long-time sponsors who have become good friends and we try to do as much as we can for them as regards product support and placement, we never abuse what they do for us. I try to run the team smartly and try to get sponsorship for everything that we use, from paper towels and cups to titanium and raw materials. We try to be smart, not flash – I mean, I drive a 10-year-old Citroen! My interest is only to make the team better, I want our sponsors to see that their money is being wisely invested."

When you rely so heavily on outside investment a recession can only be a bad thing but so far UTAG have not lost any of their support, the only change being that some investors prefer to pay on a monthly basis rather than giving a lump sum. This isn't a massive problem but obviously a motocross team spends the majority of its budget at the start of the season, resulting in cash flow problems during the early part of the year.

Whatever Steve is doing he is doing it right but he's quick to point out that he certainly hasn't done it all alone. "There is no way I would be where I am now if it wasn't for the help of some key people," he points out. "My dad, who sadly died this year, taught me all about mechanics and discipline, Les Shepherd taught me about machinery and bikes. My friend Martin Mansbridge, owner of Bike-It, has been a massive backbone to my career since '96, taught me to strive for things and has been a huge benefactor to the team. There's also Ron Willis, from Brenmar, who told me to invest looking at the future and not just next year as well as Yamaha boss Andrew Smith who has given advice and support whenever we got into difficulty."

"It's with the help and support of these people that we've got the team looking as good as we do – we don't look a shambles, we take a pride in what we do, that's the image we want for our sponsors."

Everything about the team is polished and professional, you can see that from just looking at the rig in the paddock or checking out the immaculate presentation of the race bikes. The image is one that is carried through to the 2000 sq ft Hampshire-based workshop. The team has been based here for 10 years with the unit being provided as part of Brenmar's (an office refurb specialist) sponsorship package. The workshop comprises an office, stores room, tyre room, dyno room, machine shop, suspension/motor room and bike building room, all colour coded, clean and shiny! Including Steve there are five full-time staff here – Mikey Whitewick is truck driver and Zach Osborne's mechanic, Mel Pocock's mechanic Ben Popperwell, Zane Mumford who is also Zach's wrench (Zach is notoriously hard on bikes) and Nick Mathews who takes care of hospitality, the workshop and machine shop.

When we roll up the bikes are being prepared for the upcoming weekend's British championship round at Duns and Zach's bike is on the dyno being put through its paces. The dyno is state of the art – the room's pressure-sealed with a full extraction system fitted – and I try to sneak a look at the dyno reading. Mikey tells me that if I see the reading he will have to kill me and he doesn't look like he's joking!

"Honestly, there's no way I can let you know," Mikey explains. "The only people who know are me and Steve, none of the other staff, not even the riders are allowed to know. All I can say is that it's 'significantly' more than standard." So I slope off to the office to try and trick Steve into telling me but there's no cigar there either!

In the bike building room are the three gorgeous race bikes having the finishing touches put to them, resplendent in their factory Michelin rubber, Akrapovic exhausts, Talon wheels and secret Rinaldi motor parts that even the likes of Nico Aubin can't get his hands on.

Both riders are allocated six bikes for the season with each bike doing no more than four GPs. At the start of the year all 12 bikes are stripped down to their component parts and Steve and the team work their magic on them. Frames are ground down, forks and suspension are changed, coatings are applied and the motors are worked on – tuning is Steve's baby and each head has 35 hours put into it. >>



Billy MacKenzie won two GP overalls during seven successful years with Steve



STAR PUPIL!

BILLY MACKENZIE >>

In its various guises UTAG has employed more than its fair share of top motocrossers over the years with its favourite son being none other than Scottish ace Billy Mac.

"Steve took me in when I was only 14 and my first full year was when I was 15 in the schoolboys," says Billy. "I was with the team for seven years and won two of my grand prix overalls with Yamaha, also scoring some moto wins. It was a great atmosphere at Steve's, I was living around the workshop and everything was done to help me make it as a professional."

"There was never any corners cut and he also understood I was still just a young kid growing up and learning, there was never a lot of pressure because Steve understood how hard I was on myself. My bikes were always in brand new condition and Steve worked hard to get them tuned up to the max. My mechanics were Mikey and Ben while I was there, who are still there now. It is a really nice set-up, the workshop is fantastic and the history and experience the team has proves it's still a very successful outfit. I had some great days there and have some very fond memories."



Gordon Crockard –
"lost his way"



Andrew McFarlane –
"very demanding"



Martin Barr –
"extremely talented"

ROLE OF HONOUR

STEVE'S STARS >>

PAUL MALIN: "Very talented, great guy, we had some brilliant years together. Unfortunate not to get a world title due to his injuries."

GORDON CROCKARD: "Started well in testing but got hurt early in the season. Sort of lost his way as regards confidence. A good very hard worker but a frustrating season for all."

MARTIN BARR: "Extremely talented rider but injuries hampered his progress in '08 forcing me to make changes to the rider line-up for the team to achieve the results we wanted."

CARL NUNN: "A great guy to work with and very talented. Influence by others early in his career hampered his championship goal."

BILLY MACKENZIE: "Extremely determined rider that has achieved great results. While being blisteringly fast some days he could just as easily have a nightmare day."

JULIEN BILL: "Lots of potential but didn't put the commitment in."

KENNETH GUNDERSON: "Ideal role model whose work ethic equals mine but unfortunately he got injured. One guy I'm glad to have worked with."

CARLOS CAMPANO: "Too easy going. He should have achieved better results for the amount of effort he put in."

BRIAN JORGENSEN: "Similar to Kenneth, a very hard worker and an attitude that I liked. Very nice riding technique."

ANDREW MCFARLANE: "Very demanding rider and determined to achieve results."

ZACH OSBORNE: "A very nice guy who is very technical on the bike and exciting to watch. He's very dedicated to winning even though he is only 19 and 12,000 miles away."

MEL POCOCK: "Great kid who has been catapulted into GP racing when he should really have been riding schoolboy yet he's doing really well."



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PRO FILE

#338 – ZACH OSBORNE >>

Age: 19

DoB: 25/09/89

Nickname: Merkin

Racing: 13 years

Lives: "In my Renault Traffic, parked in a field like a pikey."

Achievements: "I won some amateur championships at Loretta's back in America, I was the 2004 Junior world champion, two AMA SX podiums, two GP moto wins and a GP overall win."

Ambition: "To be world champion and go back to America on a good team."

MX hero: "Jeremy McGrath was always cool."

Favourite Simpsons character: "I hate them all!"

Thoughts on UTAG: "Well it's a 10/10 – it couldn't be any better. We need a travel agent but other than that it's mega! I see myself here for at least a couple more years – well a couple more days if Steve doesn't get my visa sorted!"

The praying mantis of MX racing meets the oomphal lumpa of MX journalism



In the machine shop is a CNC mill, two CNC lathes and welding equipment where, as well as development, Nick and Steve produce their own titanium bolts, modify brake calipers, produce rear brake carriers, rear brake pedals and internal motor parts.

Without trying to sound all clichéd there is definitely a 'family' atmosphere among the team – including the riders – with everyone in a good mood and happy in their work.

"I enjoy my life, I have been with my wife Levina for 15 years and I am lucky to have my two boys, 16-year-old Brad and two-year-old Jack," confides Steve. "I am also lucky in that I enjoy coming to work every single day. It's certainly not financial ambitions, I just love what I do. I try to provide a good working environment for the team – they work 7am to 3pm each day and all live locally so get to go home each night with the weekend off if we're not racing and that's a major benefit of being based in the UK. Everyone gets on really well but like a marriage sometimes there's a bit of tension! We all treat each other with respect."

The team dynamic works and as well as the staff being happy in their work the team seems to bring out the best in their riders with Malin, Nunn, MacKenzie, McFarlane, Brian Jorgenson and Zach Osborne all scoring their maiden small-bore GP victories aboard Dixon bikes.

With all of the finishing touches complete the bikes are rolled into the 40ft rig, resplendent in its UTAG graphics. Inside is like a home from

home with Sky, 42" Yamaha plasma TV, sleeping for six, GH 18m awning, leather sofas and the ability to cater for over 100. In fact, who am I kidding? It's much better than my home! When travelling to the GPs the wagon carries enough spares for any eventuality and if it's away for three GPs on the bounce then five spare engines will go with it as the team try not to do any motor work unless it's in the controlled environment of the workshop. This is no mean feat as Osborne is so hard on engines that he uses a set of crankcases per event!

"I think Zach would go faster if he changed gear a few more times," laughs Steve. "But we try to build a bike to suit Zach's style, not try to change him."

After years on the circuit Steve knows his way around a motocross track and casts a knowing eye over proceedings as I grab some shots of Jeff before he pulls in shaking his hands. "I can't believe it, 10 whips and I've ripped the skin," whimpers Jeff. "Would that be eight jumps and two whips?" smirks Steve in reply.

While we watch Zach practising a rhythm section Steve calls him over and points out that if he took a different line around the berm leading into the section he would be quicker. Osborne protests that he's already going around it 'Rossi stylee' and can't get round any quicker. Steve walks over points where he thinks Zach should go and Osborne proceeds to knock 0.8 seconds off his time.

"My main focus these days is getting the

money in," Steve admits. "Without it we have nothing. I am investing in the workshop, building for the future – I want our sponsors to have a base they are proud of. For me winning a world championship would be nice but it's not the be all and end all for me. Going racing is about being happy and enjoying it and providing the sponsors with value for money, not for it to be a bind or saying that it's a money drain. That's why I'm here seven days a week, still going, still full of enthusiasm and proud of what I've achieved."

With that Zane pops his head around the door to tell Steve that the 2010 YZ250F has turned up. This signals the end of the interview – there's fettling to be done!

THANKS FOLKS!

STEVE SHOWS THE LOVE...

"Cheers – I can't stress enough how important our sponsors are to us so here's a shout out and big thanks to them. UTAG, Yamaha, Bike-It, Brenmar, Yamalube, UFO, LA Tooling, TCX boots, Monster Energy, Arai Helmets, Triple S Chains, Armstrong Disc Pads, Filtrex Oil Filters, Michelin, Langcourt, Renthal, YMT Technologies, Bike Tek, Talon Engineering, GP Pro, Enzo Racing, Grotesk, Totally Dynamic, Twin Air, Braking, Wossner, Rinaldi R+D, Oelikon Balzers, Venhill, Pro Carbon, NGK, Southcott Homes, Martins Rubber, Paines Ltd, Vans, CRM Compositi, Southcoast Pumping, Making Impressions, RaceBikeBitz, JDS Van Sales, Trafalgar, MXM, OGIO, Zeta, MGP Steel, Akrapovic, The Awning Company, Raptor, DAF Timber, Bott."

ROCKET SHIP!

JEFF PERRETT SWINGS HIS STUMPY LEG OVER ZACH OSBORNE'S UTAG YAMAHA
AND RECLINS ONCE YOU GET PAST THE ALIEN FEEL IT'S A GP-WINNING
THOROUGHBRED THAT'S JUST BEGGING TO BE REVVED TO THE MOON...

Words by Jeff Perrett

When it was first announced that Zach Osborne would be coming over the Atlantic to race for Steve Dixon's UTAG Yamaha team it was refreshing news. Not because I know Zach personally but because I know enough about him to say he's one of the most exciting riders you're ever likely to watch.

I don't know if it's due to his body structure or simply because it's the way he's learned to ride but if you study Zach's technique you'll notice that his riding position on the bike stands out from all his fellow pros – in fact it stands out from just about everyone else! He positions himself on the bike with his backside more towards the rear of the seat and crouches his torso forward with his head nearer the handlebar pad in an aggressive attack mode – like a praying Mantis who's just had his pint knocked over!

It certainly mirrors the way he rides, that's for sure. No-one can say Zach isn't aggressive. He slams into just about every obstacle in his way and accelerates out of every corner as if he's just stolen the bike and is being chased by the rozzers. Of course, being a pro rider Zach is in the position where he has a team around him to tailor a bike to his needs rather than trying to adapt his style to the bike itself. We can all buy a bike and then get a pipe, tune the motor and suspension and put different bars on it etc but being a pro racer going for GP wins means that you can take it several steps further.

When you have a good close stoop around Zach's YZ250F you soon realise two things. Firstly the work that has gone into it and secondly that UTAG Yamaha are an ultra-professional team. Dixon has dedicated most of his adult life to his team and built a solid foundation on which it can stand firm – and stand firm they do as one of the UK's top teams for well over a decade. The attention to detail that the team applies reflects in the bikes they put out on track and build for their riders.

Obviously, a seemingly endless list of mods separate Zach's bike from a stock YZ250F – some clearly noticeable to everyone and others that are not seen by the naked eye. One of which is the bizarre ergonomics of Zach's bike set-up. It's not until you throw your leg over the bike and sit on it that you realise the extent of his own style. Let's not kid ourselves here, neither Zach or myself are exactly strapping six-footers – I think it's fair to say we both fall into the short, stocky bracket (for me read dumpy and fat). So I thought I'd get on Zach's bike and it would feel just dandy – I was wrong. It just felt completely alien to anything I've ever ridden. And that was before I'd even fired it up.

The bike sits lower on the rear due to a 5mm shorter Enzo Kayaba shock and you notice that straight away but not as much as where Zach has his bars and his seat bump. I never raced with a seat bump and after riding Zach's bike I'm not sure I ever would. It just seemed to be right where I wanted to sit and bizarrely it was too far forward to where I'd have it. Considering his style I was expecting it to be further to the rear of the seat but on closer inspection it looks like Zach sits on the bump for the best part and only uses it behind his ass for tight turns. Obviously it works for him – but not for me, that's for sure...

His Renthal 999 bars are then swept right back almost into your midriff and his levers are relatively high. It's just weird and makes you want to tuck your elbows in like you're rowing, straighten your back and ride like a goon! Clearly that's not the case for Zach but that's how the ergonomics of his bike worked for me and I don't need any help looking like a spode rider!

Once you get moving on it though you realise it's a bike that's earned the right to a GP win. It's certainly one of the fastest MX2 bikes I've ever ridden and definitely the strongest YZ250F I've ever had the privilege to have a blast on. The gear ratios are different and they've stretched first gear to make it more useable for Zach but to be honest I'm amazed he even needs to use it. The motor has incredible bottom to mid-range power and I found myself going for third and using the torque rather than going down a gear to first and making the valves dance like Riverdance meets the Prodigy on amphetamine!

Of course, Zach is of a different opinion and after several laps he said I should knock it down a cog and get it on the pipe. Maybe that's why Steve says he goes through bike parts more than any other rider that's ever been on the team but that's the Zach attack for you.

Considering this bike is tuned to his needs it's incredibly versatile in the power department. It just rips in a fantastic, linear curve with loads of grunt – a wonderful cocktail of the Rinaldi engine tuning feedback with an equal measure of Dixon's years of experience and a burst of zest from a complete made-to-spec Akrapovic exhaust system. It's not all mouth with nothing to back it up, it has power in its punch and feels like it can rev to the moon.

It's stupidly responsive too considering it isn't an EFI, you've only got to twist the grip a fraction and that power is transferred into the ground in an instant making it easy to control. Power is nothing without control and all that jazz right? This has it like Robert Mugabe!

The suspension also took me by surprise. I watched Zach at Foxhill as he slammed, scrubbed and twisted his bike into all kinds of shapes at speed and I was honestly expecting a bike that had to ridden like that to make it work but that's not the case at all. I was expecting the suspension to be stiff and rigid – particularly at the top of the stroke. That seems to be the American way – certainly most manufacturers set their bikes up that way for the US market – but Zach's set-up suited me perfectly and caught me off guard.

I've always run my suspension softer than most, working on the theory that if you're not getting tyre marks on the mudguards you're not using the full travel on offer. Zach's bike seems to do that, as does Mel Pocock's bike for that matter. As with any GP racing bike a lot of effort goes into every element and none more so than the suspension, something many club racers should consider before getting a bike tuned to high heaven when they can't even get the most out of stock engine.

Zach and the team run Enzo/Kayaba all serviced in-house by his mechanic Mikey Whitewick to great effect. The forks are held in RG3 clamps and have different fork tubes and internals and a thicker wheel axle. They are so plush on the first part of the stroke but seem to sit at the perfect ride height to work with the shorter rear shock – basically the bike rides level and is very consistent in its performance. In only a few laps I knew where I was at with it and that made me ooze with confidence as much as it did sweat and before long I had the confidence to seat-bounce my way through the brilliant new rhythm section at Somerset's premier practice track – Rocket World (if you've never been there, then do)! The rear shock has a sub tank chamber that stops it fading in the tough environment of a GP race and bearing in mind Zach's swashbuckling approach that's probably worth its weight in gold while the valving is awesome, lush in fact.

Like all the good things in life it's easy to take this bike for granted once you get moving on it because things come so easy on it. It turns great, something that Yamaha down the years have often been criticised for. I've got no doubt the sublime suspension helps on that. The brakes have that new car feel after you've been driving a s**ter for years!

With the Venhill hoses, Braking oversized 270 bat-fly discs on the front and wave discs on the rear coupled with the in-house machined calipers there's great feel and stopping power along with weight reduction. It's not until you ride a bike with race spec brakes that you realise the difference they make – again it's a confidence thing.

It's the attention to detail and the little specs that add up to make a huge difference. Like the CRM carbon-fibre sub-frame, Pro Carbon skid plates and water-pump guards, high pressure radiator caps, raptor footpegs, heat shielding around the carb, carbon fibre fuel tank, in-house manual chain tensioner – I could go on but I think you get the idea. The bike smacks of quality because it is quality – plain and simple.

A big thanks to Chris Rose for the use of the excellent **Rocket World** – for more info contact him on 07989 239415... |



bike test

Jeffro reckons Zach's Yamahauler is the strongest YZ250F he's ever ridden - and he's ridden a few



Levi Sherwood pulls a Shaolin Bar-Hop backflip – the Kiwi teenager makes it to the final where he's KO'd by Nate Adams



HIGH VOLTAGE

BATTERSEA POWER STATION FIRES BACK INTO LIFE AS THE RED BULL X-FIGHTERS WORLD TOUR SIGNS OFF IN LONDON...

Words by Adrienne Hill Photos by Ian Roxburgh and Jorg Mitter/Red Bull Photofiles

Battersea Power Station – dormant and derelict for the last 25 years – explodes back into life as the Red Bull X-Fighters light-up London in a fully-charged season-ending showdown.

In front of a sell-out 18,000-strong crowd, the iconic building entertains some of the world's top freestylers for a night of high-voltage, high-flying action which sees Nate 'The Destroyer' Adams soar to victory and claim the Red Bull X-Fighters title as defending champ Mat Rebeaud gets a large dose of crash and burn.

There's one word that best describes the 2009 X-Fighters series – intense! Coming into the London finale four riders from four continents are still in with a shout of the title with American Adams leading the charge from Japan's Eigo Sato, Aussie extreme legend Robbie Maddison and Swiss star Rebeaud.

The course is built from brick and crushed concrete and suits all styles of jump jockey from super-smooth Maddo to punky Sato. Space constraints mean it's one of the smaller on the X-Fighters tour but it's also one of the more dramatic with riders jumping into the arena through a third-floor power station window.

And there's even a Brit in the main line-up! Chris Birch has the fiercely partisan crowd on his side from his first take-off to his last landing but despite stringing together a polished sequence of two-wheeled aerobatics – including a totally dialled back-flip – the judges refuse to bow to public opinion and his evening ends early. But Swampy isn't the only rider to fall at the first hurdle – Adam Jones, Thomas Pages and Andre Villa also fail to make it through to the head-to-head rounds.

The shocks start in the quarter finals where

Rebeaud and Sato see their dreams of X-Fighters glory come crashing down – for Rebeaud literally. The defending champ picks up a flat just as he hits the far ramp, loses drive and although he nails the flip he comes up waaaay short and lands like a sack of spuds on the upslope of the landing, bouncing his head off the bars and out of the contest. Sato – top dog of the MX Virus Crew – is carrying an injury sustained the day before and Adams makes short work of the man from the Land of the Rising Sun. Jeremy 'Twitch' Stenberg also bails out at this stage along with Mike Mason.

The semis see the first coming together of the big guns as Maddison takes on Nate Adams while Flying Kiwi Levi Sherwood is up against Dany Torres for a spot in the final. That's four previous '09 winners in the last four making the outcome too close to call.

The Spaniard impresses the judges with a cocktail of tricks but Sherwood – despite failing to produce a rumoured forward-flip – wins three out of the five judging elements and rides into the finals. The Maddo versus Adams semi is effectively the series decider – whoever progresses through to the final will take the title – and despite a smooth start it's the Aussie who stuffs up, first stalling his bike and then almost mirroring Rebeaud's crash when he spins up before the far ramp and barely gets enough drive to prevent a messy nosedive.

So it's The Destroyer who goes into the final against Sherwood with the title already his but – true champion that he is – he's one X-Fighter who ain't about to rest on his laurels and he underlines his superiority by pushing the 17-year-old Red Bull rookie back onto the second step of the podium.

BATTERSEA BITES

ANDRE VILLA

DBR: How are you finding it so far?

ANDRE: "Yeah it's nice, I expected it to rain in London though."

DBR: How are you finding the track here compared to the other tracks that you've been on?

ANDRE: "The track is smaller and easier than most of the other tracks I've been on but there is still some tricky stuff out there which makes it challenging for us."

DBR: Have you been practising any special moves that you're going to reveal tonight?

ANDRE: "No, no new moves tonight."

DBR: Are you aiming for first tonight?

ANDRE: "I still have a long way to go but yeah I'm definitely aiming for the top – I am always aiming for the top!"

JEREMY 'TWITCH' STENBERG

DBR: How are you finding it in England at the moment?

TWITCH: "It's pretty sh**ty, I hate it! No, I'm joking! It's pretty cool! It's the first time I've been here and I've always looked forward to coming here!"

DBR: How about the track?

TWITCH: "The track's fun, it's easy to ride!"

DBR: What do you think your chances are tonight?

TWITCH: "I'm hoping to be in the top three with a trophy at the end of the night – that's the plan!"

DBR: Who do you think your main competition is tonight?

TWITCH: "Erm...Nate and Dany are riding really good so I'll see what happens."

DBR: What do you think about all Maddison's tricks and world records that are happening at the moment?

TWITCH: "He's a pretty gnarly dude, he just goes for it. I watched him flip the bridge so I'm going to front flip it next year..."

DBR: A front flip!

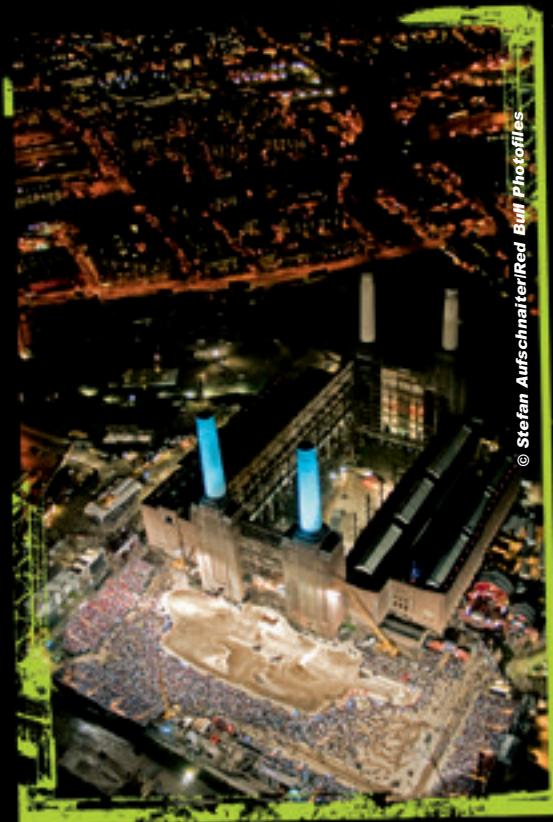
TWITCH: "Yeah, a front flip ha ha!"

DBR: Have you got any special tricks coming out tonight?

TWITCH: "Everything! It's all secret though!"



Robbie Maddison lands in London with a shout at the title but stuffs up his semi against Adams



© Stefan Aufschnaiter/Red Bull Photofiles



© Predrag Vickovic/Red Bull Photofiles

BATTERSEA BITE

DANY TORRES

DBR: How are you feeling about tonight?

DANY: "I am so happy because it's my first time that I am here and yesterday I had a good run for second position. I know today it will be difficult to win here because the level is so high and very similar."

DBR: You won last year's finale, has that given you a bit more confidence for tonight?

DANY: "Yeah and I hope that I win here in London!"

DBR: How are you finding London?

DANY: "Fun, I'm happy here and I like the track."

DBR: You've recently got a new tattoo of your family – will they be here supporting you tonight?

DANY: "Yes, I have a new tattoo of the name of my new baby and my girlfriend and they are here tonight watching me!"



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MX2 BRITISH CHAMPION

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BATTERSEA BITE

MAT REBEAUD

DBR: How are you feeling about tonight?

MAT: "I'm feeling pretty good and I'm very excited to be here and it's good and pretty sweet."

DBR: You're equal third at the moment but can still take the title tonight...

MAT: "Yeah, sure, especially because there's a lot of pressure between me and Maddo, Eigo and Nate and whoever wins tonight will win the championship."

DBR: There's not a lot in the points difference between the top four at the moment...

MAT: "That's why it's a lot of pressure but I try not to think too much about that and try to have fun and enjoy my week in London."

DBR: How is the track at the moment?

MAT: "They've just fixed the track – everything is flat and everything is good for when we ride."

DBR: You've been training a lot with Levi Sherwood. How has that been for you because obviously he's so much younger than everyone else?

MAT: "Yeah, it's very cool. Levi is very young and has the young flexibility so he can get a lot of extension on his tricks. I think it's quite cool to have him at practice because we work pretty good together. He is a lot younger than me and has the energy and you can get that young energy."

DBR: Do you feel like you are his mentor?

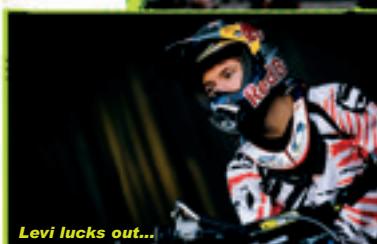
MAT: "Ah no, we have fun and I must take care because he is pretty good!"

DBR: How do you think the English crowd will compare to all the madness at places like Mexico and Madrid?

MAT: "I can tell you after – it's pretty much the biggest event in England for motocross freestyle so who knows?"



Nate Adams tops London and the final Red Bull X-Fighter standings



Levi lucks out...

RED BULL X-FIGHTERS

FINAL SERIES STANDINGS

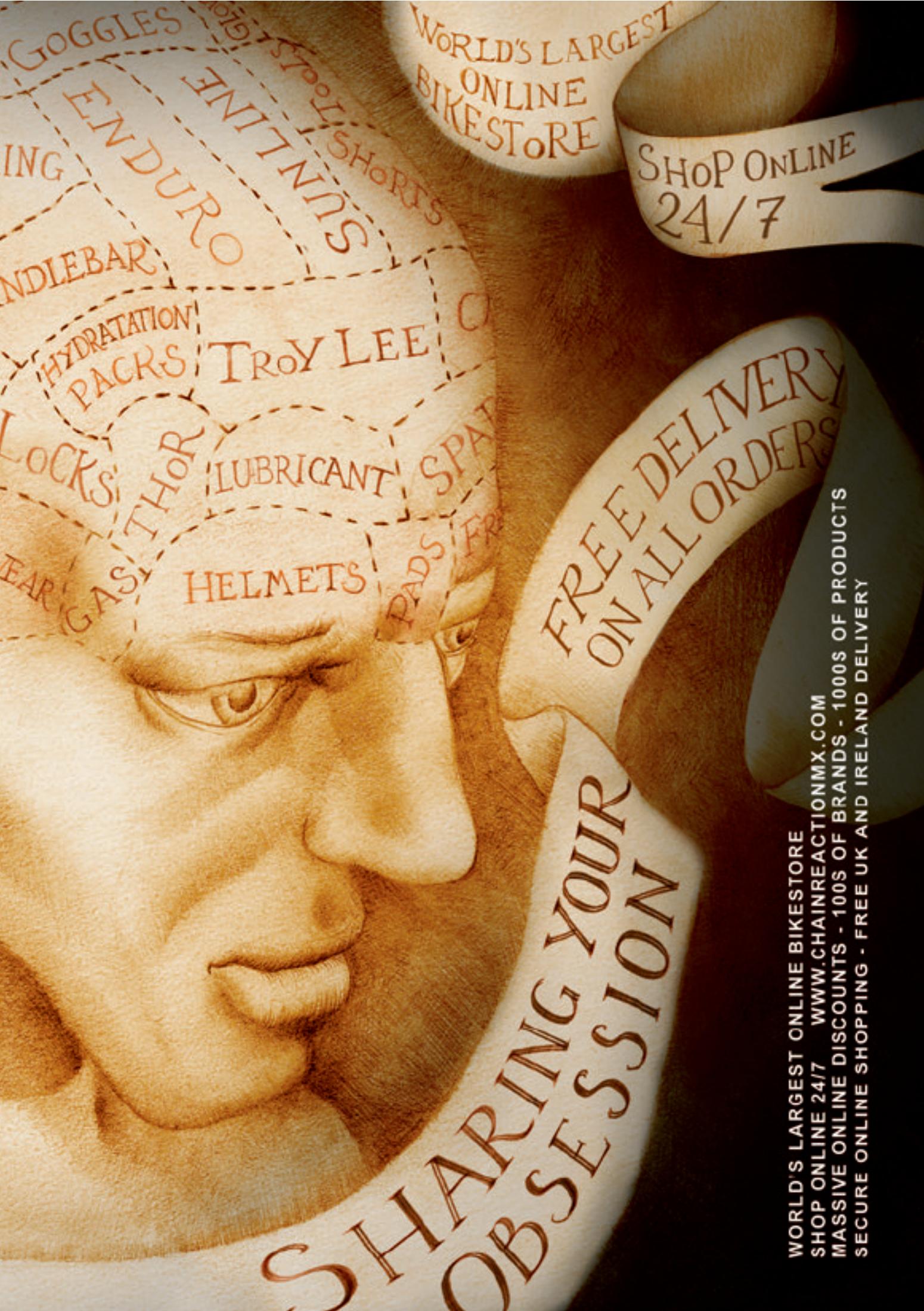
1	Nate Adams	USA	325 points
2	Robbie Maddison	Aus	265
3	Eigo Sato	Jpn	245
4	Mat Rebeaud	Sui	245
5	Dany Torres	Esp	215
6	Levi Sherwood	NZ	210
7	Jeremy Stenberg	USA	190
8	Cameron Sinclair	Aus	165
9	Thomas Pages	Fra	110
10	Andre Villa	Nor	100



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ALREADY A CLASS-LEADING BIKE, SUZUKI'S RM-Z450 PROMISES EVEN MORE FOR 2010 WITH A SHEDLOAD OF MODS PRODUCING A SWEET-TORQUIN' STEED SUITABLE FOR ALL STANDARDS OF RIDER...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Redeye





Chad Reed, Ken De Dycker, Steve Ramon, Carl Nunn – can these gentlemen be wrong with their weapons of choice? Team DBR got the invitation to get out and test the 2010 Suzuki RM-Z450 recently to find out if the big yellow weapon is every bit as good in the hands of a normal(ish) rider as the top guys make it look week-in, week-out.

The RM-Z450 might not look massively different in appearance to the previous year but there have been significant changes made in most departments aimed at improving every area of the already class-leading bike. Let's take a detailed tour through the improvements...

The engineers at Suzuki HQ have been hard at work developing the DOHC

four-valve motor to improve power delivery and increase power through the entire range. They have re-profiled the cams and re-worked the cylinderhead porting to increase the performance as well as improving the camchain tensioner and have developed a new throttle linkage to improve low-speed response from the motor.

The EFI on the RM-Z has also come under the development eye to make improvements. The throttle valve movement has been reversed to re-direct the fine fuel-air mist from the 12-hole fuel injector away from the throttle valve for a more even mixture, therefore helping to increase power and throttle response.

The RM-Z is shod with Showa units front and back. The suspension has been given revised spring and damping rates to work

with other areas of the modified chassis. The forks remain as a 47mm diameter and the shock has high and low-speed compression adjustment as well as rebound control. The rising rate linkage system receives revised link-bearing tolerances to help with precise and sharp handling.

The RM-Z twin-spar aluminium frame has undergone a transformation in its rigidity for optimum balance across the chassis. The headstock has a two-piece design which is 9mm taller than the 2009 model. The rear of the frame is now wider to increase rigidity and the upper frame bridge under the seat is also given more width. Material wall thickness has undergone a change to save weight.

There's a neat little 'plug in' which comes with the RM-Z450 which lets the >>

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RM-Z450

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 449cc
Bore and stroke: 96mm x 62.1mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 6.2 litres
Front suspension: Showa 47mm
Rear suspension: Showa
Seat height: 955mm
Wheelbase: 1495mm
Ground clearance: 325mm
Kerb weight: 113kg



Suzuki have produced a bike that all levels of rider will enjoy tearing up the track on



rider soften the power from stock to allow the bike to be easily 'tuned' for lower grip conditions. No need for a laptop, just plug in and ride smooth.

The bars-to-pegs-to-seat dimensions all felt good on the Zooki upon the first mounting of the vehicle. The controls as expected all felt positive and smooth. I was looking forward to the ride and taking my time to get into the track. Starting the bike was super easy and first impressions of the bike were awesome and the rideability from the smooth power delivery made the first few laps on the bike a treat.

The track was smooth and grippy so the power delivery was easy to get a feel for. The roll-on power was predictable and in the heavy going parts of the track the power was able to dig deep to get my largeness up the hills through the deeper mulch. The power is in no way overpowering and this bike is by no means scary in the way it delivers the ponies to the track. Tractability is there for all and throttle control makes for the ease of ride. If you do get a little

bit aggressive with the throttle the bike keeps things under control with its delivery through the EFI not allowing things to get too buck wild.

With the motor delivering what is expected of it the chassis balance and feel has to be up to the job. The more rigid feel through the frame is evident and the balance of the Showa suspension therefore has to be set correctly. The rear of the bike was a little low and soft for me through the first part of the test but with a small adjustment to the preload we were making the bike react with great stability and control on the rougher track. Turning off corners where there were no lines was easy and it was good to have the confidence in the bike to search out alternative and fun lines each lap.

Jumping was fun on the bike and its ability in the air far outweighs my ability in the air – balanced and easy would be the words as long as you put your weight in the correct area...

The brakes are superb and offer great feel without feeling aggressive. The clutch required quite a lot of adjustment through the test which I

will put down to the motor oil. If the oil is not perfect on any 450 the clutch will get a spongy feel to it and the bike didn't get a chance to rest for the entire day so it was getting a fair pounding in the motor oil department. The clutch never lost its grip on things but it was the only part of the bike I could point at as a potential weak spot if the wrong motor oil is used.

Time was limited on the day but the bike reacted and gave superbly positive feedback from all departments to make a superb 'out of the crate' package. Suzuki have aimed for this with their design and development for this new model and they have certainly put a bike together which every level of rider can get on and enjoy without thinking they will be hanging off the back of the puppy like a flag!

This 450 really is made for use from the top to the bottom of the rider scale as hobby riders will get as much from it as the Chads, Kens, Steves and Carls of this world. Good work Suzuki...



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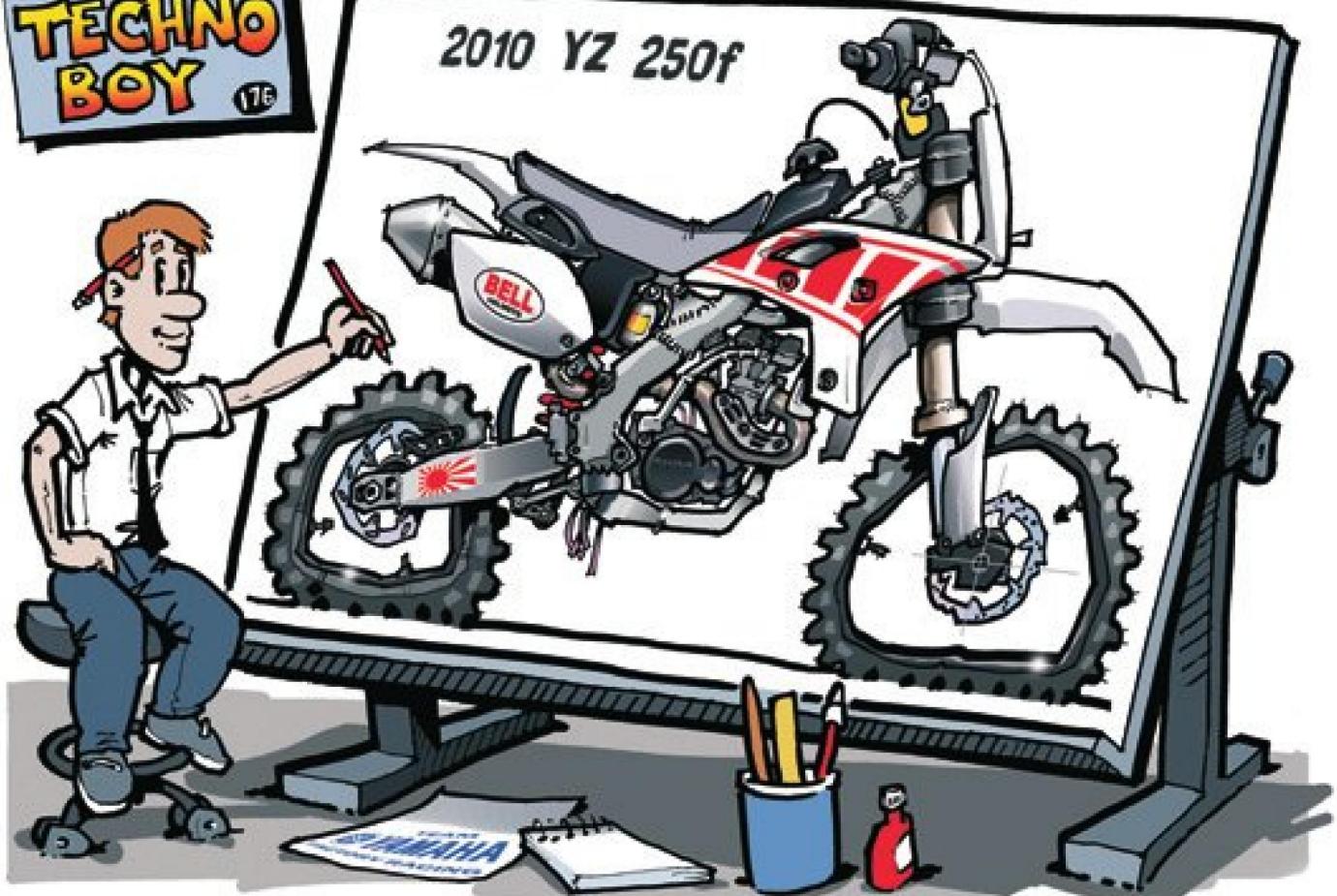
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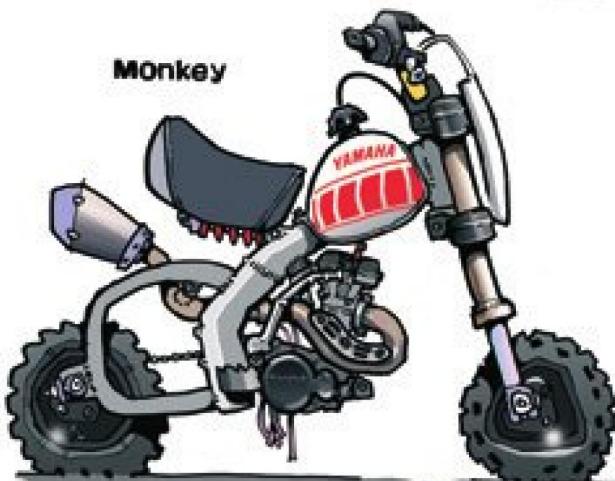
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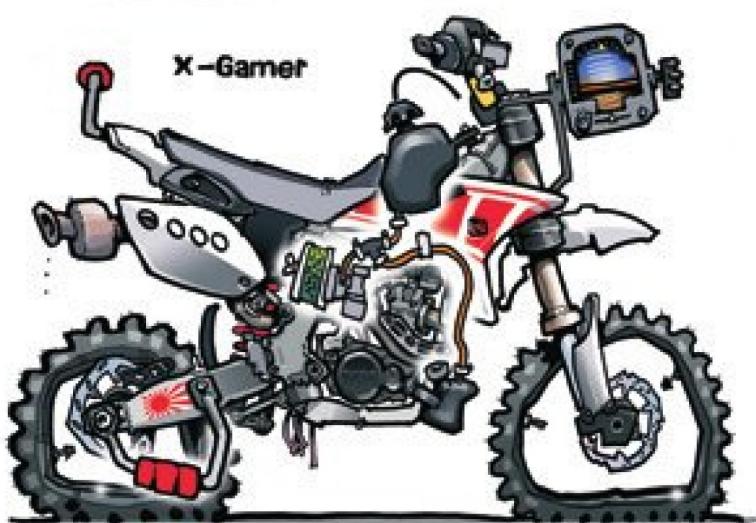
2010 YZ 250f



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Trials





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1988: CAGEVA DU &
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RICK JOHNSON ROCKED!
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WALKED TO HIS FOURTEEN
STRAIGHT GP MOTO
WIN IN 1988



JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Beila and nutty (his words, not ours) musical geniuses Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentor, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

ROARING FORTIES!

QUITE POSSIBLE THE FINEST MOTOCROSS TRACK ON THE FACE OF THE PLANET, UNADILLA VALLEY SPORTS CENTER IN UPSTATE NEW YORK CELEBRATED ITS 40TH BIRTHDAY THIS YEAR. JACK PAYS TRIBUTE...

Words and photos by **Jack Burnicle**



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Possibly the greatest motocross track in the world has just celebrated its 40th birthday! Unadilla Valley Sports Center at New Berlin in the USA was founded by Ward and Peg Robinson in 1969. The lush green, loamy land in upstate New York – 220 miles north of Manhattan in the heavily wooded Catskill Mountains – became famous for hosting 15 consecutive US 250 GPs from 1978 to 1992.

A genial, 19 stone East Coast giant, Ward Robinson got fired from an insurance company for being 'involved with motorcycles'. So he bought a dairy farm on which he used to hunt for the sole purpose of racing. "The AMA didn't sanction motocross at that time," he admits. "So we started as outlaws, doing what they called 'hare scrambling'."

Ward was always positive about making Unadilla work after watching early European marauders like Torsten Hallman and Joel Robert race at Pepperell. He felled a lot of trees and filled up culverts but everything else – including Gravity Cavity, Screw-U and the long, gnarly hills – was "as the land came". He drew no wages for eight years, put everything into keeping the track in corking condition and ran a non-points scoring 'grand prix' in 1975.

"The FIM came over, inspected the track and three years later granted us a world championship round," he smiles with visible satisfaction. "We wanted a true GP with true European representation." So he and his vivacious little wife Peg annually visited an early season round to sign up the 250 GP regulars. "They were loyal, those boys," he recalls. "There wasn't a lot of money among them so we didn't just pay them minimum start money. We covered their expenses to come over."

The riders, for their part, adored Unadilla and 1981 250 world champion Neil Hudson, the first of only two overseas winners, reckoned it the finest track he ever rode. And two-time victor Bob 'Hurricane' Hannah said it was "the best race of the year – I could ride 20 times here in a season!"

Hannah never feared the terrifying fans at Unadilla's 250 GPs and would stroll in their adoring midst, chiding them and being heartily chided back. I paid my first visit in 1981. Hudson had hired a motorhome for the weekend but found that riders weren't allowed to stay on-site overnight. So he and wife Dawn shifted their camper adjacent to Freeway 8 which separated circuit and paddock from the public campsite, appointed Burnicle concierge and left for their hotel – in my hire car! It was one of the eeriest nights of my life, like being planted in a Fellini film set. Amid the constant

cacophony of rock bands and dense haze of campfires and dope, pick-up trucks plunged through a lake, the toilet block was torched, fireworks exploded, bonfires burned, drunks roamed and finally the cops arrived and fired teargas. This, apparently, was the annual Saturday night rockfest that gripped 'The Thrilla in Unadilla'. It was, quite literally, fantastic!

The fans were divided into two opposing factions.

The loud, red-necked 'Hill People' occupied the upper ground alongside Gravity Cavity, baying like a pack of wolves at any glimpse of womanhood. The distant valley side hosted the gentler, hippier 'Valley People'. 'Nellie' Hudson, after a sound night's sleep, made them acknowledge the foreign armada by broadsiding his Yamaha to victory ahead of Honda's Steve Wise, Dutchman Kees van der Ven (KTM) and first-race winner Donnie Hansen.

The 250cc supercross champion three seasons earlier (on a Can-Am!), Honda new boy Jimmy Ellis won the inaugural Unadilla GP in 1978. It was reigning SX champ Hannah's turn in 1979 ahead of Kent Howerton. Russian Gennady Moiseev (KTM) was the first Euro to mount the rostrum but still lost his world title that day to Hakan Carlqvist (Husqvarna), third behind the Americans in race two. Howerton won both motos in 1980 but was twice chased home by brilliant Belgian teenager Georges Jobe who clinched his first world championship. Van der Ven emulated Hudson's feat in 1982 – trading race wins with David Bailey (Honda) – and it was Bailey's turn to lift the trophy in 1983.

My second visit, in 1984, saw 17-year-old Californian Ron Lechien outlast his Honda team-mate Hannah and Suzuki's Mark Barnett – the first American podium sweep since that inaugural grand prix in 1978. Hannah lost out again – to another Honda team-mate, Johnny O'Mara – the following year before I returned to witness their historic second-race duel in 1986. Newly reborn at Suzuki, Hannah was supported by a huge blue and yellow wooden banner announcing 'On the eighth day God created Bob "Hurricane" Hannah!'. Suitably inspired, Bob forced such a pace that the O'Show's Honda ran out of fuel on the last lap to hand the Hurricane a rapturously acclaimed victory.

Ricky Johnson swept to his first success in 1987 before leading the US to a rain-lashed MX des Nations triumph back in New Berlin that September alongside Hannah and Jeff Ward. Johnson then made it two 250 GP race wins on the trot in 1988 ahead of the evergreen Hannah and Yamaha's Micky Dymond with

sand-loving Dutchmen John van den Berk (Yamaha) and Gert-Jan van Doorn (Cagiva) tied for fourth. That evening, van den Berk's English mechanic Graham Kent kindly drove me back into the heart of Manhattan where we stepped over a sleeping vagrant at the foot of the stairs to my friends' apartment on the upper East Side around midnight!

Johnson completed his hat-trick in 1989 and then I was back in 1990 to see Italian Alex Puzar win the world championship for Michele Rinaldi's Chesterfield Suzuki squad. But first I had to collect French photographer Patrick Boulland from JFK airport. After a night enjoying New Orleans-based British bluesman John 'King' Cleary in a New York club, I was amazed to meet Cleary on the airport bus and ended up at his next gig – the Weaver's Arms in London – a week later!

Pat and I drove upstate in his hire car and saw Honda's new signing Jeff Stanton win both motos while Puzar, ignored by the fans and coarse commentator Larry Maiers ("let's beat these damn commies!"), rode coolly to sixth and the 250 world title in race one. Boulland immediately shot off to catch his 'Moto Verte' magazine deadline in Paris, leaving me to be dropped off in Harlem on Monday morning by Jamie Dobb and his dad John. They were understandably concerned to leave me surrounded by burned out cars and, turned away by taxis, I eventually boarded a bus for a slow, surreal journey down into Manhattan where I naively realised I hadn't seen a white face in over three hours!

Stanton dominated Unadilla's last two GPs, securing Honda's 10th win in 1992 when he was joined on the podium by Dutchman Edwin Everts and Clement Desalle's current LS Motors team manager Marnic Bervoets. The Europeans may only have won twice but they claimed a 33 per cent rostrum record round one of the roughest, toughest grand prix venues ever.

Unadilla has since become a bedrock of the AMA Nationals. Ward Robinson, now 72, still works every day at the track while Peg concentrates on administration and running the family insurance agency. And their enthusiastic kids Jill and Greg plus Greg's wife Linda combine proper jobs with the physical labour and race promotion necessary to perpetuate the awesome off-road legend that is Unadilla Valley Sports Center.



NEVER **SAY NEVER!**

HARDLY ONE OF KTM'S MOST FERVENT FANS, JEFF PERRETT HITS THE TRACK AT RUSHMEAD RACE PARK AND FINDS THINGS MORE TO HIS LIKING WITH THE 2010 RANGE OF AUSTRIAN MXERS...

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Sutty

I'll level with you – I've never been much of a KTM lover really. I've never been sure why and it could be down to a number of things I guess. I certainly have never been one for the look or cut of the plastics – I prefer curves and rounded edges. Maybe it's just the colour or the graphics? I honestly don't know but they've just never been my cup of tea which is a shame because I love a good brew! But as my dear old ma frequently tells me, you should never say never (she also says "stop it Jeffrey, you're short-sighted as it is" but that's another story)...

The bare arse fact is that KTM have become very, very proficient at making highly competitive motocross bikes. Each weekend in the hands of everyone from the average Joe right through to the factory pro KTM are winning races – a lot of them! Okay, it hasn't exactly worked out for them in the USA and that elusive MX1 crown still awaits them in this millennium but that's not to say they're way off the mark in producing a bike that could conquer the world. Next year will be the acid test for KTM as Antonio Cairoli becomes their shining light to put that right. It could be a sticky wicket for KTM if he doesn't as cynics will undoubtedly point fingers at the bike which, of course, would be grossly unfair.

One thing you can't dispute is that KTM put a lot of heart and soul into their motorcycles and their brand, it's evident wherever you cast your eye in motocross and off-road motorcycling. And there's also no doubting the fact that no other manufacturer can match the Austrian marque when it comes to the size of the range on offer. And don't I know it! Riding one bike in a day nigh on finishes me off these days, riding five of the blighters gave me visions of my body becoming the MX equivalent of road kill.

Luckily, fate was on my side. I'd double-booked the test session with the highlight of my year – going to see Pearl Jam at the O2. So the stiffness bordering on rigor mortis that a day of riding now brings me was eliminated by thrashing out a blast on five bikes without even having time to wipe my brow, followed by alcohol and adrenaline overload. Just another day in my rock n' roll lifestyle! Er, yeah, anyway I was saying...

Riding all the bikes in quickfire succession actually worked a charm as I could really tell the differences in them. As I was running late I jumped on the nearest bike available so let's start with that...

250SX-F

Over recent years this is the bike that has brought KTM most success out on the track and it's easy to see why. It's fast! KTM's first 250 four-popper had a stupidly strong motor from the outset and what they've managed to do is refine the motor with little tweaks every year to make it better – just like a diamond its real value is when it's cut and polished.

And this is indeed a diamond of a motor. More than ever before it's easy to ride and the torque is spread so far. The powerband on this bike is from when you open the throttle until you can't twist it back any further. I reckon you could almost just put this bike in third and use it as an automatic. It starts bloody easy too and as an avid two-stroke fan that scored points for me.

The motor is a given but the suspension I'm not so sold on. For me the valving just needs a little smoothing out – arguably on all of the models – and the rear end seemed a little too hard. I think it depends on your level and many would say it's the other way around and that the front end is too soft but either way the balance isn't quite there.

450SX-F

There's now some beauty in the beast! This bike has gone from wild cat to tamed tiger and is a big improvement on last year's model. It's a hell of a lot easier to ride and because of the now usable power and the new frame it seems lighter and more manoeuvrable.

Because the huge hard-hitting grunt has gone you can roll the power a lot more without fear of your eyes getting pushed back in their sockets while your arms get ripped from theirs. It's the biggest improvement on any KTM MX model for as long as I can remember and to be fair it's overdue on this bike. In one fell swoop they have brought the 450 up to speed with its little sibling the 250SX-F and given it matching street cred. However, it's not quite all there yet and like the 250SX-F the shock and forks seem out of sync even though it does turn incredibly well.

250SX

I'm not going to bang on about how I love two-strokes and how they're much more fun to ride and make you a better rider and all that – oh look at that, I just have! That's always been my opinion on the 4S versus 2S debate but it all depends where you're at with your racing.

If you want to be really competitive then the four-strokes make it easier but of course this comes at a cost. However, in the current economic climate you could do a hell of a lot worse than this >>





450SX-F

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 449.3cc
Bore and stroke: 97mm x 60.8mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 8 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 380mm
Weight: 104.6kg

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bike. Like the 450 this two-stroke is still a rocket but now think of it as a Catherine Wheel and not a Screamer. Basically, it's a very user-friendly bike now. It's mellow, has plenty of useable torque, maybe it's still a little bit of an animal for the club rider that might be better off on the 250 four-stroke but if you're caught in two minds between a 250F and a 450F and can't decide then buy this. For me – just purely because of what I want out of riding a motocross bike at all levels – this is my ideal weapon of choice in KTM's range.

150SX

Unhappy with your partner? Then get one of these because basically it has all the attributes of a top-notch bit on the side so you can fill ya boots and have all that excitement without the guilt!

It's nimble, exciting, sexy, dangerous, fast, fun to ride (wink, wink, nudge, nudge) and you won't stop grinning from ear to ear. You will not stop thinking about it while it's parked up and you'll be dying to hook up and sneak out of work to get together. In fact, you may want to install a webcam in your workshop for those late night liaisons! I think you get the idea with this one...

It's a pocket rocket and I'll argue the case all day long that although it may not quite have the minerals to compete with the 250Fs it still has its place in the racing scene for young riders learning their trade who aren't quite physically strong enough to ride a 250 two-stroke or four-stroke. Or, of course, a 30-something working on his middle age spread and edging towards a mid-life crisis!



125SX

As far as I'm concerned this is the bike that made KTM what they are today. It dominated the 125 class before the introduction of the 250F and it's still an incredibly good bike. Where it fits in the marketplace is a tough one to figure out though and that's a shame.

Like the 150 it has so much power for a bike of its capacity and it's always right where you need it. The question is does it have enough to compete with the 250Fs? Er...no! The 150 is pushing your luck, racing the 125 would be racing for pride and keeping it real. However, if it's a 125 championship such as the Fuchs-Silkolene series you're on a winner with this one. There's definitely enough oomph straight from the crate and it would only take a few minor refinements to have a very competitive bike.

250SX

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 249cc
Bore and stroke: 66.4mm x 72mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 8 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 385mm
Weight: 95.4kg

250SX

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 143.6cc
Bore and stroke: 56mm x 58.4mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 8 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1471mm
Ground clearance: 390mm
Weight: 91kg



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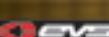
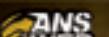
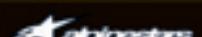
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250SX-F

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 249cc
Bore and stroke: 76mm x 54.8mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 8 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 380mm
Weight: 98kg

As far as weaponry goes KTM have a solid arsenal – no question. Obviously, so far it hasn't been enough to win the battle in America but then does it have to when they can win the war in Europe? They offer up a great range of bikes for everyone (and I do mean everyone although we never got to test the 85 and 65).

KTM know they are onto a good thing and have worked hard to produce bikes that will fit from the beginner in all age levels right up to the pro. They have some brilliant equipment on them as standard – the Brembo brakes in particular; they were awesome on all of the bikes – and now it looks like they'll be making an effort to bring the prices into line with their

Japanese rivals and taking the battle to them there too.

Okay, so there are a few little issues like the full lock isn't great on the two-strokes as it hits the frame bolts way too early and the front forks on all models tend to blow through. I'm not convinced about the PDS either – I find the bikes okay in the braking zone but through corners and accelerating away it still feels to me like they're never truly planted and want to slide around like a freshly caught fish on a trawler's deck.

I don't think I'm alone with that notion but with talk of a linkage KTM on the way I may have to take my mum's advice yet again... |



bike test

*Martin gets all Lampkin
on the 300EXC's ass*





STROKER LOVE!

WITH ANGRY GEOFF WALKER BUSILY THROWING HIMSELF (PLUS MTB) DOWN A MOUNTAIN SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE WE DRAFTED IN SELF-CONFESSED TWO-STROKEAHOLIC AND EXTREME ENDURO SPECIALIST MARTIN CRAVEN TO TEST THE 2010 KTM EXCS

Words by Martin Craven Photos by Redeye

I should probably kick off this test with a bit of a confession and that's that I'm a big KTM fan. Or, to be more precise, I'm a huge fan of their 300cc two-stroke. I race a '09 model in extreme enduros and having finished Erzberg in 20th and run top 10 at The Tough One I reckon I know the bike inside out.

Of course, the 300EXC is just one model in an eight-bike range with three more two-smokers and four four-bangers combining for what must be the most comprehensive collection of off-road machines offered up by any manufacturer.

We were flown out to Tuscany in North West Italy – not far from the location of the

Hell's Gate extreme enduro – for the launch of the 2010 Toomers and there was some pretty hardcore terrain waiting for us with an eight-mile enduro loop that featured extreme and chicken routes. You've got to hand it to KTM, they're not afraid to give us something challenging to sling their new bikes at...

For 2010 KTM have taken a close look at the geometry of most of their enduro machines and the 125 and 200EXC models come with a steeper steering head angle and an extra 2mm steering head offset which – on paper at least – should make for sharper turning. And it does – both bikes handled really well, turned brilliantly and felt light and precise.

But while the handling wasn't a problem I did struggle with the power produced by the smallest two EXC two-strokes. Straight away I felt comfortable on both of them due to the excellent handling but I found myself really having to work hard to keep the 125 in the powerband and was constantly clutching it and crashing through the gearbox on the tighter bits of the enduro loop.

The 200 is nearly an excellent bike – again, it felt just a little bit under-powered. You had to really race it – there was no time to relax at all and you had to be on it constantly. But if you were on it then it felt awesome and again that super-light feel inspired confidence. There was a decent >>



9800 GEAR BAG

The supersized 9800 was made to move with oversized, off-road wheels and a retractable pullman handle, but its protected compartments appeal to anyone who travels hard and heavy. The redesigned 9800 powers up protection with the aid of the new SLED (Structural Load Equalizing Deck) system, while providing padded protection for unlimited gear.





bottom-end on it which was great for the nadgery bits, not a lot of mid-range and then quite a lot of top-end. But I couldn't ride on the mid-range – it was either bottom or top for me.

The 250EXC's an animal – pure and simple! A full expert bike purely down to the hit off the bottom. It was phenomenal. Very quick. It was nice and sharp on the bottom-end and the hit came in almost straight away. It's very similar to a motocross bike but this shouldn't detract from enduro use because a good expert will use it in the special tests – it's an excellent motor for special tests.

You could be forgiven for thinking that this is a mistake – why bring out a bike that only the really quick men will want to race? It doesn't make sense! That is until you swing a leg over

the 300EXC. This is the bike that the switched-on clubman will go for and if there's a better bike on this planet then I need to ride it.

First gear, second gear – you can ride anything! You can very nearly trials ride on it. You can ride over any rock, any log, it never wants to stall, it's got power whenever you want it. There's no big hit – you can start from nothing and it will just pick up beautiful all the way through to the top-end.

The 250 and 300 have a 20mm steering head offset and to be fair there's no need for the extra 2mm featured on the 125 and 200 as the handling is mega on both. Again, there's a light, nimble feel and the brakes are awesome across the entire two-stroke range. But out of the two-strokes the 300 is the stand-out bike – >>

125EXC

[SPECIFICATIONS >>](#)

Capacity: 124.8cc
Bore and stroke: 54mm x 54.5mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1471mm
Ground clearance: 390mm
Weight: 97kg

200EXC

[SPECIFICATIONS >>](#)

Capacity: 193cc
Bore and stroke: 64mm x 60mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1471mm
Ground clearance: 390mm
Weight: 97kg

250EXC

[SPECIFICATIONS >>](#)

Capacity: 249cc
Bore and stroke: 66.4mm x 72mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 385mm
Weight: 101kg

300EXC

[SPECIFICATIONS >>](#)

Capacity: 293.2cc
Bore and stroke: 72mm x 72mm
Transmission: Five-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 385mm
Weight: 103kg

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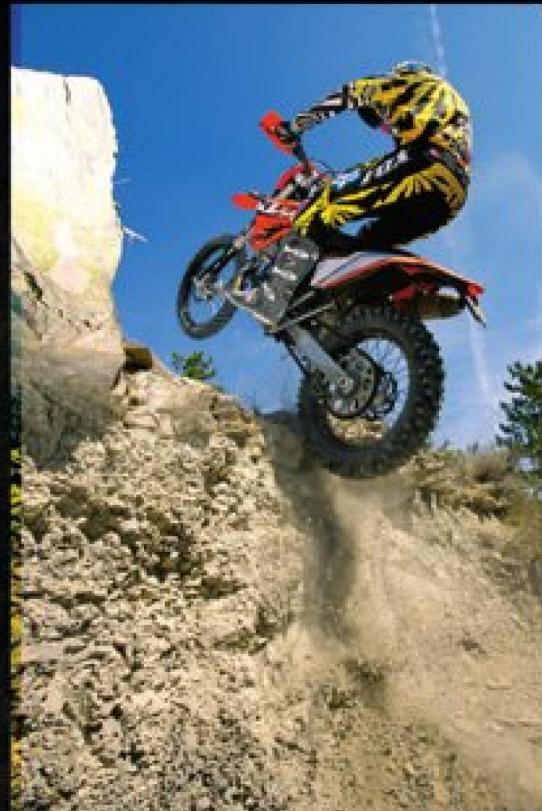
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*Compared to the two-strokes
the four-strokers' extra weight
is noticeable*



down to the extra weight. They felt a lot heavier. And I couldn't get used to the engine braking. I could ride a full eight-mile lap on any of the strokers without problems but as soon as I did a lap on a four-stroke my thumbs started to ache.

I thought the 250EXC-F was the best bike out of all the four-poppers, if slightly under-powered. It felt nice handling wise but you could tell it was a little bit heavy for the power and the engine braking was quite hard to get used to for me after jumping off the two-strokes. The clutch also felt a little heavy on it and caused me to stall a couple of times.

Up to the 400EXC now and I'd rate this as a lovely trail bike. For me it didn't feel competitive – this is the bike for the guy who wants to do green laning or race clubman three-hour hare and hounds. There's lots of nice tractable power all the way through with no big hit – it just felt a little bit under-powered and a little bit overweight. It handled very well though.

And there didn't feel to be a great deal of difference between the 400 and the 450 – it was just a little bit punchier in the mid-range. Out of corners you could keep it in second or third gear and ride pretty much everywhere in third and it would pick up from nothing. But it felt a bit heavy if you're going to go into extreme events or pro-level hare and hounds races.

The daddy of KTM's off-road range is the 530 EXC and this is a beast! It only needs one gear – I could set off in third and do the full lap in third and it never missed a beat. A really fast, comfortable bike with great brakes and great suspension. But the engine braking and weight was a low point for me. On steep downhills it took some stopping and I could really feel the pressure on my hands.

250EXC-F

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 248.6cc
Bore and stroke: 76mm x 54.8mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.2 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 380mm
Weight: 105.7kg

400EXC

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 393.4cc
Bore and stroke: 95mm x 55.5mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 380mm
Weight: 114kg

450EXC

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 449.3cc
Bore and stroke: 95mm x 63.4mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 380mm
Weight: 114kg

530EXC

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 510.4cc
Bore and stroke: 95mm x 72mm
Transmission: Six-speed
Fuel tank capacity: 9.5 litres
Front suspension: WP 48mm
Rear suspension: WP PDS
Seat height: 985mm
Wheelbase: 1475mm
Ground clearance: 380mm
Weight: 114kg



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Okay, so his two main rivals crashed out of the series – but Chad Reed did all that was needed of him to lift the AMA 450cc title this year...





Racer X's editor at large. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides insight straight from the Stateside scene...

Steve Cox is an American moto-journalist who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. Since moving on from US weekly Cycle News he's struck out on his own to do the freelance thing and recently became one of

STATESIDE

A U S S I E RULES!

CHAD REED TAKES ON THE AMA NATIONALS FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 2006 AND TAKES HOME THE GOLD

Rockstar/Makita Suzuki's Chad Reed is a happy guy because he's clinched his first ever motocross championship. Yep, you read that right – his first ever! He's never won one back in Australia, in Europe or in the USA – but he has now.

And he's done it in dominant fashion, clinching the title with fully four motos left to run...

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DBR: What went into the process between you deciding you wanted to ride the outdoors to finally getting the okay to do so?

CR: "I basically had this thought come up in my head over and over again that I wanted to go race outdoors again and you can't ignore it after a while. I considered it and I talked with Ellie a lot about it and then I just concentrated on supercross. It was a last-minute sort of thing. I brought it up with the team all year long but never really brought them to the table to let them know how serious I was."

"At the end of the season I sat down with Roger and told him my plans and my goals and at that point I had my mind made up that I really wanted to go racing in the summertime. Roger had to go to work then to get the approval from Japan and it wasn't easy. There were three weeks between the last round of supercross and the first round of the Nationals and for two weeks of it I didn't really know. It was difficult to be in that position – to make your mind up and want to go but then have them not able to support me, potentially. You just think they'll support you but it's a budget issue. It was a relief when I finally got the okay to go."

DBR: For the last few years, though, you would've just had to say "I want to race outdoors" and people would've been jumping through hoops to make it happen for you but times have changed...

CR: "Totally. That's how it's always been in the past. It's more about how it is now. Had it been somebody else maybe it wouldn't have been so easy but I was lucky enough to be in a good position and I have a good track record of being consistent and all that. It was tough. Economically, it didn't make a whole lot of sense to them to go and do a budget that really wasn't planned. It was tough."

DBR: At the beginning of the season you had bike set-up issues. What were those?

CR: "It wasn't really issues, I just hadn't spent any time racing outdoors in two years and the team hadn't tested with me. I tested twice before we went racing at Glen Helen. I just had to start from scratch. Not having the settings 100 per cent tailored to me, that was the problem. We just fought it up until Millville or so and we're still working on it to make it better."

DBR: You also had the physical issues so that was kind of a double whammy. How did you get that sorted out?

CR: "Honestly, I think that played as big of a role as the bike set-up. During the week you go testing and you can go fast for a lap or two. It's pretty simple. So you set your bike up to go that speed but with the physical condition I was having at the beginning of the year, it's kind of like I didn't have a whole lot to give and I couldn't ride at that pace so my bike was off not only because the guys didn't know the setting for me but also me not riding the bike fast enough and with enough force. It slowed the process a lot."

DBR: That's interesting. So you have to be in race shape to get your bike into race shape...

CR: "It's so predictable, year-in and year-out, whether it's supercross or motocross – the way the bike starts the year and the way the bike ends the year, it's always different but it's consistent. You race, you get into race shape, you figure out all the little things and then you always end up in the same place at the end of the year. At the beginning of the year, when you're not completely in race shape, it's hard to speed up that process."

DBR: Over the last few rounds you've been murdering those guys out there. Then, at Budds Creek in the first moto, Davi Millsaps had over 20 seconds on you when you got into second at the halfway point and you damned near had him at the finish line. Is this what you envisioned riding like when you committed to the outdoors?

CR: "Yeah, this is how I saw it. I knew the reality of it all and some of it maybe I underestimated a bit. I think the sport has changed a lot and things are a little different than the last time I did this. The tracks are different, they're not as gnarly... They're not as 'motocross' as what they once were. With that you've got to adapt and change and coming into it I felt that I had what it took to win and to be the champ. As it turned out it kind of worked out perfect and I took a huge gamble on myself and that's what made it fun – and tough – all in one season."

DBR: How much did you actually bet with Lloyd's of London and how much did you get in return?

CR: "I can't tell you exact figures but it was at least twice as big of a payday as I've ever had before. Well over two [million]."

DBR: How does this work? It's like a wager but since it's an insurance policy is it tax-free?

CR: "I've always done it and most riders do it. And if they don't they're stupid – or they just don't have any confidence in themselves or they aren't in a position to win. But how much it costs is based on the riders which is why some of the lower-ranked teams can offer huge bonuses because it's a big gamble and for those guys to go win on those lower teams it's highly unlikely. For me, with my Lloyd's thing, it's difficult – really difficult. With my track record of being consistent and being there week-in and week-out I'm a high risk for them as a guy who can win races and championships."

"So there were a lot of terms and conditions in my policy that I didn't necessarily agree with but I had no say in the matter. For example, if I'd have won this championship but didn't achieve three overall wins I would've gotten no money at all. There was a stipulation that I had to win a minimum of three races and a few other things in there as well. And I bought this policy when Ryan [Villopoto] was there, when I thought James [Stewart] was going to race, when I thought [Mike] Alessi was going to be there all year long and it cost a good 300 grand to purchase it. It's not easy but I felt that I could get it done and if all went well and I did what I thought then I would end up taking that gamble and winning."

DBR: That's ultimately the difference between a real strong racer and someone who's out there just to collect a pay cheque, isn't it? Racers will wager on themselves...

CR: "Yeah, you take a gamble on yourself. It's racing, though. Anything can happen. Injuries are easy to have happen. Bikes break. There are a lot of things that go into it and that's what makes it so fun and enjoyable when you can pull it off. But I've always bet on myself. I bet on myself when I was 18 years old, packing two suitcases with my then girlfriend and headed off to Europe knowing nothing about it.

"I've come a long way since but I still bet on



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myself. But that's the sort of stuff that makes people who they are. You've got to have that headstrong sort of confidence in yourself and if you don't have that, nobody else will [laughs]. You can't have somebody else believe in you. You've got to believe in yourself and put in the work that it takes to win."

DBR: Yeah, for sure. For example, Jake Weimer signed a one-year deal with Pro Circuit because he believed he was going to win and get a better contract for 2010. He could've signed a two-year deal if he wanted to but he wanted more in 2010.

CR: "And look at Jake's results! He's done extremely well. He had the most consistent and strongest supercross season that he's ever had and almost was champ there and outdoors he's proven his work because he's never really been a guy that's been there week-in and week-out outdoors but he's doing it now. He's getting ready to don the red, white and blue [for the USA MXdN team] and that's the coolest thing ever.

"He's a guy who was willing to take that gamble and now he's put himself in a great position because he's well ahead of any other Lites guy because his two closest competitors [Ryan Dungey and Christophe POURCEL] are getting ready to step up to the big-boy class and he immediately becomes the next guy in line to be a champion. And from what he learned this year, I truly believe that he's going to go win a championship next year. I don't see anybody willing to step up, even with some of these younger kids with all the speed and ability to scrub jumps, they've got to be able to put it all together."

DBR: Having won the outdoor title this year, if you're around next year does that mean you're racing outdoors again?

CR: "I just want to take it year-by-year. I think it's important and I had a lot of fun this year but with saying that, I've always said that I want to race and give it my all and I want to be able to be in that happy place to be able to do that. So first and foremost I need to secure a ride for next year and then just take it from there. I would love to sign a supercross-only contract again and then make the decision based on how I feel physically and

emotionally and all that. If I show up you know I'm going to give it my all and I'm going to be in a position to win and, if I don't, then something's not clicking and I'm not ready to go racing."

DBR: You're the top guy for Team Australia whenever you're healthy but despite very good teams the last few years you guys have never done well and under-achieve at the MXdN. Talk to me about that...

CR: "It's not an individual race. Three guys need to put themselves in great positions and just be there at the end. Out of six finishes they take the best five so you can drop your worst one. You just have to limit the damage. All the teams that I've been on – except on my first trip there in 2000 when we all had pretty good finishes and we were all unknown to the world outside of Australia – have had a tough time.

"I think it really takes someone who is a leader and somebody that can calm your team down and you've also got to go there and have fun. As long as the team's enjoying being around each other and is in that happy place you can just let your riding do the talking. Every year we get more pressure to perform because we're all guys who can put it on the podium here in the US so we should be up there on the international level. We're proven worthy to be on the podium and to be challenging for the trophy.

"It's important this year that we get on the podium – that's a priority – and I believe that all three of us [Reed, Michael Byrne and Brett Metcalfe] have pretty much had enough of the bulls**t and we're all ready to step it up and go for the W. Bring home the gold. It would be awesome for Australia, anyway, because it's such a small country. We're in the running and we have three great riders, three great bikes and I think it's time.

"On the day we just need to control the emotions of it. It's a team race and you can't let your individual emotions overtake the long-term goal – that goal on that day – of winning the trophy. You've got to put yourself in the best position possible and if that means just placing yourself in the top two or three to stand on the top of the podium at the end of the day that's what you've got to do. You've got to be smart and I feel that, as team captain, I'm going to do everything I can to make this team work and get the gold."



CHAD REED #22

Ryan Dungey rocks the old-school Fox look at Unadilla's retro round of the AMA Nationals





ONE DOWN...

...ONE TO GO! SPEEDY REEDY WRAPS UP THE 450cc CROWN WITH FOUR RACES STILL TO RUN BUT THE 250cc FIGHT GOES ALL THE WAY TO STEEL CITY

Chad Reed has never done extraordinarily well at Unadilla but the series organisers left it on the schedule anyway! Jeff Alessi grabs the holeshot in the first moto and he actually leads the first two laps, pulling away from Honda Red Bull Racing's Davi Millsaps. However, he then remembers he's Jeff Alessi and promptly goes over the handlebars handing the lead to Millsaps.

Meanwhile, Reed starts just outside the top five and seems downright calm as he works his way forward. By lap five he's all over Millsaps and he finds a line around him on the sixth lap and goes on to lead the last 10 laps.

Late in the race, as he begins to fade, Millsaps is caught by Canidae/Motorsport Kawasaki's Tommy Hahn who ends up second. Millsaps is third in front of Reed's Rockstar/Makita Suzuki team-mate Michael Byrne and Millsaps' team-mates Andrew Short and Ivan Tedesco. And in a fill-in ride for the Monster Energy Kawasaki team, Gareth Swanepoel grabs a strong seventh place.

In the second moto another Honda gets the start with Short taking the lead over Jagermeister KTM's Justin Brayton, Reed, Tedesco, Byrne and Swanepoel. Again, as if in no rush, Reed works his way past Brayton, then Short and pulls away to a seemingly easy victory. Short hangs on for second over Byrne, Brayton, rookie surprise Kyle Regal, Swanepoel, Timmy Ferry and Tedesco.

Coming into Unadilla it's almost a given that Monster Energy/Pro Circuit Kawasaki's Christophe Pourcel is going to win the 250cc class. It's a slick track that gives an advantage to smooth riders with good throttle control. And Pourcel wastes no time establishing his dominance, taking the lead on the second lap of the opening moto and just flat-out running away with the race over his championship rival Ryan Dungey and Team USA's Jake Weimer.

Pourcel repeats the performance in moto two, except this time with a holeshot followed by a runaway. Again, Dungey and Weimer trail at the finish. So leaving Unadilla, although Pourcel and Dungey went into the race tied on points, Pourcel takes a six-point lead out of the race.

Unlike Unadilla, Reed is strong at Budds Creek and the last time he rode a national there, in 2007, he literally came out with no training, was visibly overweight and still finished third overall behind Ricky Carmichael and James Stewart.

In the first moto Millsaps gets the holeshot and immediately checks out over Jeff Alessi, JGR/Toyota Yamaha's Cody Cooper, Nick Wey, Cooper's team-mate Josh Grant (who is coming back too early from hurt ankles suffered at the X Games), Team Yamaha replacement rider Matt Goerke, Monster Energy Kawasaki replacement rider Jake Moss and Reed.

Reed goes down on the opening lap but only loses a spot, then he again takes his time moving through the pack – perhaps too much time. By the time he gets into second place on lap seven he trails Millsaps by over 20 seconds – or three full straightaways – and the prospect for another win looks dim.

However, he begins chipping away at Millsaps' lead and by the last lap he's all over the Honda rider. But Millsaps beats him off – barely – at the finish, scoring his first moto win of the year. Reed holds on for second in front of Goerke, Regal, Tedesco, Byrne, Short, Wey and Ferry.

In moto two as it starts to rain Reed gates second to Tedesco. Although Hot Sauce puts up a valiant fight Reed eventually passes him and pulls away to an easy victory. Late in the race Hahn catches and dispatches Tedesco for second with Regal fourth from Byrne, Millsaps, Brayton, Ferry, Moss and Short.

It's Reed's fourth MX overall win in a row. It's also the championship for Reed and with four races left to run his points lead is over 100 points. His journey from supercross specialist to outdoor champion is complete.

It's Weimer who gets the holeshot in the quarter-litre division and tries to run away from his crafty French team-mate but Pourcel goes to school on Weimer's lines and passes him after six laps. Weimer then has to hold off Dungey – which he does – and on the last lap he even makes a run at Pourcel but comes up short. Dungey finishes third.

In moto two the skies open up. In a flood of biblical proportions, resulting in literal rivers and waterfalls throughout the track, GEICO Powersports Honda's Brett Metcalfe passes Weimer just after the first turn and then goes on to lead the first eight laps of the nine-lap flood.

On lap nine, though, Weimer makes a pass and the race is red-flagged immediately afterwards due to the weather. Weimer's 2-1 score is good for the overall – his third of the season – and Pourcel finishes third and Dungey fourth.

Southwick – a sand track – is another top circuit for Reed having lived in Belgium for a period when he was racing the GPs. However, it's raining. Moss gets the holeshot over Reed and Byrne, making an all-Australian top three in the first moto. Reed quickly passes Moss but Moss keeps him honest for most of the race on his way to second place. Byrne finishes a ♦

SERIES STANDINGS

250cc

1	Ryan Dungey	459 points
2	Christophe Pourcel	442
3	Brett Metcalfe	352
4	Jake Weimer	322
5	Justin Barcia	312
6	Tommy Searle	309
7	Broc Tickle	263
8	Blake Wharton	240
9	Tyla Rattray	236
10	Kyle Cunningham	174
16	Steven Clarke	108
17	Max Anstie	107

450cc

1	Chad Reed	459 points
2	Andrew Short	356
3	Ivan Tedesco	338
4	Michael Byrne	316
5	Josh Grant	280
6	Tommy Hahn	259
7	Justin Brayton	214
8	Cody Cooper	184
9	Nick Wey	182
10	James Albertson	164
31	Adam Chatfield	35

strong third, completing the Aussie podium sweep. Regal finishes fourth over local hot-shoe Robbie Marshall, Goerke, Short, Brayton, Hahn and 44-year-old sand specialist John Dowd.

In moto two Short gets the holeshot but immediately starts going backwards, still suffering from some mystery illness. Reed hits the front on lap two and stretches a big early lead while Goerke moves into second and Dowd moves into third. Just past the halfway point, though, Reed cross-ruts on the finish-line jump and goes down hard, hitting his head and dropping out of the moto.

Goerke is handed the lead and he fights the rest of the moto to hang onto it over the ancient – in motocross terms – Dowd. Goerke literally sings songs in his head to keep his focus away from what he's about to accomplish and he clings on to win the moto. Because of the inconsistency of everyone else, Goerke doesn't just get his first moto win (and his first overall podium finish) – he gets the overall as well!

Even with the second-moto DNF Reed carries a 103-point lead into Steel City and Short is second with a full 18 points over his team-mate Tedesco in third.

Pourcel goes into Southwick with only four motos left to race with a 13-point lead over Dungey. But a bad start in the first moto goes from bad to worse for Pourcel – he works his way through the pack while Dungey is leading but with only two laps to go his bike breaks.

Dungey loses the lead to GEICO Powersports Honda's Justin Barcia at about the halfway point and the rookie takes the first moto win. Dungey is second and Barcia's team-mates Blake Wharton and Metcalfe are third and fourth.

Dungey heads into moto two with nine points in hand over Pourcel. World MX2 champ Tyla Rattray gets the holeshot and does his best disappearing act over Metcalfe but Pourcel goes down in the first turn. Up dead last, Pourcel works his way through the pack but seems to run out of steam when he gets to the top 10, even losing a spot to early faller Weimer in the late stages. Pourcel finishes 11th. In the closing stages Dungey loses a spot to Barcia but this time it's third. So Rattray takes the moto win over Metcalfe, Barcia and Dungey and Barcia takes his first-ever overall victory with a 1-3 score.



Daniel Reardon picks the worst possible spot to crash at Budds Creek



Since we had a little time off from the outdoors I decided to concentrate on something else and do a little supercross – X Games 15! It was going to be tough, especially for me being on my 250SX when all the others were on 450Fs. It was my first ever supercross at a professional level and was a lot to take in. And bloody hell it was amazing!

First practice was a bit scary for me. Not only did I have to get the track down but I had James Stewart, Jeremy McGrath, Josh Grant and Kevin Windham all riding with me. I swear it was only a year or so ago that I was playing in my sand pit with all the toy bikes wishing I could ride with them and now I'm finally here. I am definitely starting to become a part of this pro stuff now and am feeling more and more at home with every day that passes.

I made a few mistakes in my first heat race and was a little overwhelmed by the fact that I was racing at X-Games. So I then transferred into the LCQ. I got off to a good start and went over a triple section going double then singling to the inside because A) I was hoping to take the lead and B) I didn't have enough power to jump the whole thing on my 250SX and C) the next thing I knew I was mangled into the floor with a broken ankle after someone landed on me! Luckily that's all I have and it's not too bad so I will be back soon.

Stuff like this happens and there was nothing I could have done, we were all racing for the win and

DOWN BUT NOT DOWN!

MAX GETS USED AS A DOWNSLOPE AT X GAMES 15 BUT EVEN A BROKEN ANKLE CAN'T WIPE THE SMILE FROM HIS FACE...

Words by MAX ANSTIE Photo by STEVE COX

that's the way things go sometimes. Personally, I don't know why he was tripling it to the inside anyway when there was no way he was going to stop for the corner. So I'm going to be out for a little bit but you know a rest won't hurt...

So back to my pro debut. Everyone asks why I went so early? To be honest I wasn't totally ready for the jump. It was a big transition from racing at the amateur level to starting with the best in the world plus I had only made the jump from Superminis and 125s to 250Fs a few months earlier.

All-in-all this outdoor season has been a great experience for me. I believe that racing this season has given me some insight into the tracks and who I am racing so I feel better prepared to really get in there and race for a championship next year. I would rather mix it up in the pro ranks than race in the amateur series where I have already raced everyone – I certainly wasn't really going to gain any more speed there. Though it has taken me a while to find where I'm at this season, I have been improving and learning with each race to better my

riding. I have been working really hard to perfect my abilities and each race is better than the last so I am pleased. It's a lot of hard work but I know that I will be ready for Anaheim 1 next year and the 2010 outdoor season. My dad's motto rings really true in this sport – 'what you put in, you get out' – and it's safe to say I'm putting in a lot!

Everyone says the start makes a big difference and that's especially true this year because there's no-one that can move through the pack fast. Take Pourcel at Washougal where he went from last to eighth – in previous years we've seen the likes of Villopoto come from the back and still win by a mile. There's a good 10-15 of us that all have the same speed, another five who have a little more on their good days and then the two who are winning have a bit on all of us.

But the team has been awesome and really showed support for me each week. Jason (J-Law) and Nick Wey have been really great at helping me and showing me some lines. It's been a great season with them and I have really appreciated the whole team's and sponsors' support

throughout each National.

I just got my driver's permit too! It's really cool, I get to drive us to the tracks and into town now. I finished up my schooling programme in England and I also have a little half-sister on the way in a few weeks which is really exciting. My dad has put together the next KTM Amateur Team with the support of KTM for 2010. Each day the riders on the team and I all train together and from physical and riding stuff to psychological work, we do it all! It's exactly the same team as I was on as an amateur racer for KTM but I think it's even better because my dad is the team trainer/manager and all the riders are living at our facility in Hemet, CA. It's a great opportunity so if anyone is interested in coming and trying a KTM and checking out our training programme they can email us at devinmitchell@rocketmail.com

So, to sum up my month I'm having loads of fun not actually doing anything with my broken ankle but I'll be back riding soon so stay tuned!

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BYRNE NOTICE!

OUR INDUSTRY INSIDER CATCHES UP WITH AUSSIE ACE MICHAEL BYRNE AT SOUTHWICK...

Words by STEVE MATTHES Photo by SUZUKI RACING

Michael Byrne is one of those riders that flies under the radar on the American motocross scene. It's a combination of his and the media's fault. He's a solid rider but has never won and also never causes any problems off the track so the media carousel goes around and around and doesn't stop on him very often. I caught up with him after his tie for the overall second place at the most recent AMA national in Southwick.

DBR: Byrner, good job this weekend. You keep telling me you hate the sand but then you go out and almost win the whole thing.

MB: "I know but I'm telling you that I don't like it. Just like when I won my moto for Factory Connection on a 125, the fact that it was wet helped me. It wasn't like a true sand track y'know? I felt horrible in practice this weekend, I qualified something like 20th and it wasn't good. I went back to the truck and Roger (De Coster) and Reedy helped me out with stuff and I came out and rode better. I was happy with my ride in the motos, I got some good starts and felt pretty good."

DBR: I know that bike set-up is very important in the sand so did you go back and make major changes on the bike?

MB: "Yeah, definitely. Obviously my bike wasn't working that great with my practice times so I went back and we adjusted the off-set of the clamps. Mostly the shock was changed, we made it a little less busy and helped it settle more in the bumps. The linkage rods we put on also helped and that shock change was the major difference for me."

"By the end of the first moto I was feeling really good on the track and started catching up to Mossy [Jake Moss] and that local kid [Robby Marshall]. I just knew that I was okay and tried to put pressure on him. Luckily, he handed it to me and it was pretty cool to have Aussies one, two and three."

DBR: The week before the race I know you went down to Florida to ride with Reed and the guys. How much did that help you and what did you guys work on down there?

MB: "I went down there to ride with Chad and it helped for sure. He was just giving me pointers and helping me out on how to ride the sand. Just watching him and Timmy [Ferry] ride was great for me, I can see things that they do to help me out. It helped out to watch some good sand riders ride."

Plus it rained one day and I don't know why but me and Chad went out and rode in it and had a lot of fun. It was like we were kids again really. And it was funny because that's what ended up happening in the race, the rain was coming down just like it was during the week."

DBR: A lot of guys were telling me that it was impossible to not make a ton of mistakes out there, the track was real sketchy...

MB: "Yeah, for sure. You look at your pit-board and it showed your lap times fluctuating like crazy. It was two or three seconds a lap. The track was tough and tricky, whenever you took a risk and just pinned it you made more mistakes. It was more like a trail ride where you just had to relax and ride and put it in a higher gear. You had to be patient. In practice I struggled 'cause I was charging and trying to be aggressive."

DBR: Do you feel like once again, like last year, no-one is talking about you and your good rides?

MB: "Nothing ever changes [laughs]. People have their favourites and that's their deal y'know? I'm used to it, I just go out there and ride my best. I feel like I'm having fun, the team and the bike is awesome and everyone is looking for jobs right now. I'm trying not to stress out about that and about what I'm getting or who is getting as far as attention. I'll just worry about what I do during the week and the people that matter will pay attention to that."

DBR: Yeah, that leads me into my next question. You don't have anything for next year but, then again, no-one else really does either. You're not stressing out about that?

MB: "It can be stressful and if I wanted to stress out about it I could. I've always put so much pressure on myself to do good since I came over here that I think it's affected me and my riding. I made a promise to myself when I did my knee last year that I wasn't going to think about it and I wasn't going to stress out about it. That stuff affects me on the weekend and my results aren't as good. It just snowballs and gets worse, I'm going to just go out and enjoy being at the races because I'm not getting any younger!"

"This is it, enjoy it to the end and have fun. I don't think I should be too stressed right now anyways, nobody has a ride right now. I'm getting too old to keep stressing about it."

DBR: I would just like to see you make it through supercross really, you're better at that and haven't been able to ride a full season in two years.

MB: "Yeah, me too! Last year I was so pumped up to get to supercross because I had done so well in the Nationals. I probably was working too hard, I need to chill off a bit more and have some time off. Try and build to the first round and come in ready."

"Last year I was pushing hard on the bike the whole off-season because I just wanted to do so well. I feel I'm better at supercross than motocross and it was just devastating to have an injury and miss it. It's also devastating for the team because they put so much money and effort into a rider that when you go out and miss the season it's a big blow to them as well. This year I will be more relaxed and take my time to get into it."

DBR: Hopefully you don't have to adjust to a new bike as well...

MB: "Hopefully, we'll have to wait and see in regards to that. I don't even know, I don't have anything right now."

DBR: One of the riders that I was talking to today mentioned your name and said that guys like you won't be making much money next year and then this weekend I was talking to an agent about the silly season and he was saying that money is tight and he thinks the OEMs are going to really stick it to the riders for years of over-paying which is an interesting theory.

MB: "Well, I hope it's not true but maybe it is. It takes a lot of money to run a programme..."

DBR: Yeah, you're one of the guys that have told me about the overheads a top rider has to help him keep up at the top. If you want to be serious you have to have the track, the land, the practice bike mechanic, the water system etc etc...

MB: "Yeah, exactly. There is a lot of commitment and a lot of your own money that goes into making sure that you're on top of your game. For sure salaries are going to be affected this year but I think there is still money in this sport, it's just not going to come from the OEMs. It has to be from outside the industry. The more TV we get, the more live TV we get will just help the sport out. The teams need to get outside sponsors onboard to make up the difference."

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JUNIOR GYM!

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AN ADULT TO TRAIN BUT THERE ARE GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW FOR JUNIOR GYM-GOERS...

Words by Alan Milway

The average age of race winners seems to be coming down and there are more riders moving into the pro ranks while they're still at school. Kids are getting into riding at younger and younger ages and at a practice track just last weekend the youngster who was clearly the best there was actually on a 65cc!

With parents helping (or sometimes pushing) their children to succeed at the track, the question of training is often raised. Once a controversial issue, there is now a lot more knowledge and evidence proving that training can play a vital role in improving the performance of young riders.

It is obvious that children are not just 'mini-adults' and as such do not respond to highly-structured, regimented or serious training sessions. Where most sports embrace this, motocross isn't always the same. Everything written in this article is aimed at helping pre-adolescents enjoy their training, improve their health and fitness, perform better when they are

on the track and ultimately enjoy their racing by being able to ride faster for longer.

I'm often asked if strength training is safe to do with young, pre-pubescent children. Children naturally increase strength with age and this is logical and independent of any training they do. But we can improve the actual strength of an individual too. What is interesting is that when studies were done researching this the strength gains were similar to those an adult could expect but there was no muscle growth seen. The development was all due to neuromuscular development. This means that the brain was 'learning' to lift a weight, perform an exercise and activate the muscles required.

This shows the potential children have – regardless of muscle size or development – and we must try to fulfil some of this through training. With this in mind it's advisable to focus on exercises that use bodyweight as the resistance and just try to do the exercise with the best technique. Press-ups, sit-ups, dips and chin-ups all train upper body strength very well, are very

relevant for motocross riders and will not put children at huge risk from muscle injury. Lifting heavy weights does bring up some red flags although many reasons for these concerns are unconfirmed. However, heavy weights training can damage bone fusions and ligaments in some circumstances and for this reason using similar weight protocols to those of adults is not recommended.

As a PE teacher I know that kids love using the gym at school. With growing boys and girls the competition aspect is always evident. Technique is key and with the weights lifted being limited to only a couple of plates this focuses the attention on the technique which also helps those less developed to compete too. The dip bars and chin up bars are also great for them to learn on – just doing one or two is often a struggle but they enjoy the challenge. This is much safer than trying to lift weights to 8-10 reps and failing because their technique will become poorer as they try and lift more than their best mate. This is when injuries happen.



TOP TIPS FOR IMPROVING FITNESS FOR CHILDREN

Plan a couple of after school sessions a week that focus around enjoyment and are not too strict but maintain steady effort for up to 30 minutes.

As you develop the training add more goals to reach – laps done, lengths swam etc and add more of a challenge.

Think of suitable rewards! A meal out on a Friday, 50p per lap, new plastics for the bike, anything that might get their attention without adding too much pressure to the training.

Be prepared to get involved! You are the biggest role model they have and they will want to try and beat you. Do not underestimate the role you will have in making training fun and positive.

Use simple strength exercises such as press-ups and chin-ups before bed each day and note improvement. If you want to progress onto weights machines seek guidance for good technique.

Monitor progress and keep it fun! Set a good foundation now and it may help them keep it up and take their riding to the next level and also avoid some of the health pitfalls come 16-18...

Although there are benefits to be gained from training for strength, the major area we can work on – and get massive improvements – is in cardio training. I find it amazing how unfit the school children I teach are. Just five minutes of constant running is a struggle, the pace is often laboured and it is always clear who does any out-of-school activity. If your child races at the weekends and his only other form of exercise is PE during the week there is massive potential for increased fitness through a few training sessions throughout the week.

Cardio training for children should have a very different focus to that for adults. I use heart rates, durations and intensities as parameters for adult training plans. This is too serious for kids and training should be in the form of 'play'. The effort levels need to be steady so duration can be maximized but many will find a simple run boring. Try cross country runs through a park or in a forest. Fartlek training is ideal for kids – this involves varying speeds. So start steady and then have a mini race to a lamp post, park bench

etc. This keeps the heart beating and effort up and can be repeated as necessary.

This can be done on a bicycle too and these exercises can form a great backbone to a week's training. Think of 30 minutes as an optimal starting time for duration of sessions and work from this. It is important to point out to children why they are doing something. Explain the better they can do in their training, the longer they can go in their race, the more laps they can stay near the front and the more fun it will be.

Now then parents – why should your child go out in the cold to train if you are just going to sit in and watch TV? Be prepared to go with them even if you are just going to watch. Offer encouragement or do every other lap. Swimming sessions allow you to go along and maybe swim a little less than them but still be there and support them in their efforts.

One of the best things about getting your child into training is that they will develop an interest in their health – what they are eating, how to stay healthy etc. Test them on what they

are eating at dinner and why they need to eat it. Help them with healthy dinners and snacks and you will often find that if they know why they are eating it – and that it will make them go faster on their motorbike – they will be happy to eat it. I have taught many boys who, once they hit year 10, don't want to touch too many snacks or fizzy drinks as it holds no benefit for them and they understand why. They might be trying to look good for the girls as well as perform better but they are at the gym every lunchtime and ask me more questions than many of the riders I train...

A structured training plan for children will offer great improvements in health, fitness and their performance on the bike. However, do be aware that it should not be done as a serious, rigid chore but as something fun to do and something the top pros do too – this will motivate them to copy their role models. Set goals for them but make them realistic and help them enjoy it. They will see the results when they hit the track and this will lead to better adherence to training and more fun when it comes to riding.



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SHOX AND AWE!

FABLED MX SUSPENSION COMPANY FOX RACING SHOX ARE BACK IN THE SPORT WITH THEIR TRULY REVOLUTIONARY RC3 SHOCK – ANGRY GEOFF CHECKS IT OUT...

Words by Geoff Walker

Back in the day when men were men, bikes had two rear shocks, tracks were grassy and nature made the jumps instead of a 'track technician' in a 20-ton machine, there was a suspension company from the USA which went by the name of Fox Racing Shox.

These guys were innovators in suspension technology with the introduction of twin air shocks for the bikes of the mid '70s. They continued to produce suspension into the monoshock era winning many AMA and world MX championships. The company then decided to move and shake in other directions with the manufacture and development of shocks for off-road truck racing, ATVs, snowmobiles and their massive range of mountainbike suspension. The company have also worked in NASCAR and superbike racing during the last few years.

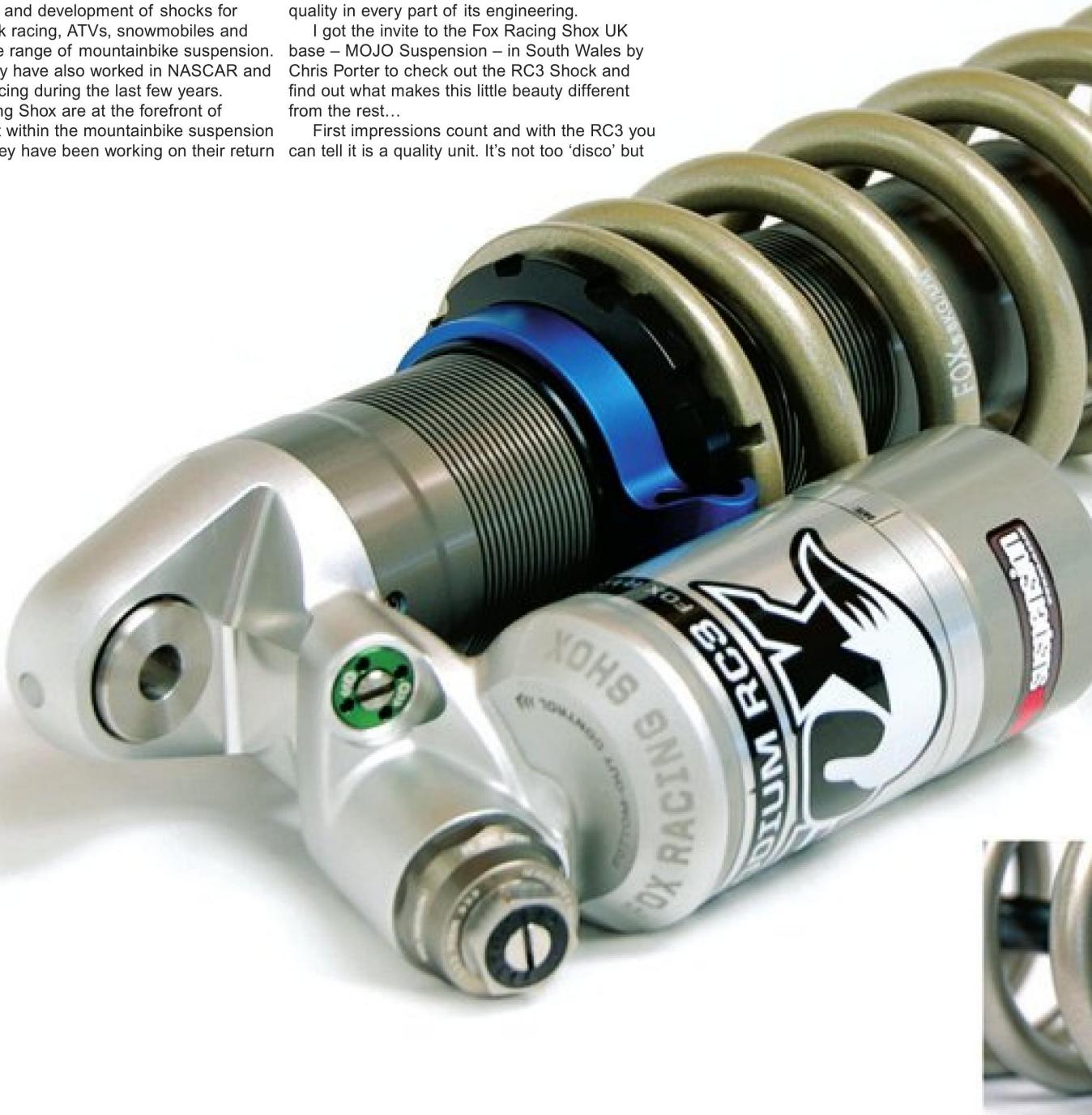
Fox Racing Shox are at the forefront of development within the mountainbike suspension world and they have been working on their return

to motocross and off-road racing with manufacture and testing in minibike and schoolboy MX shocks and fork internal upgrades. These products have been tested and developed with riders like Guy Cooper.

The full-on return to MX has now arrived for the company with the launch of the all-new and revolutionary RC3 shock. The RC3 has been used in AMA supercross and motocross by the Star Yamaha team and is currently being tested worldwide by top level GP and National teams. Fox Racing Shox pride themselves on development through racing and the RC3 oozes quality in every part of its engineering.

I got the invite to the Fox Racing Shox UK base – MOJO Suspension – in South Wales by Chris Porter to check out the RC3 Shock and find out what makes this little beauty different from the rest...

First impressions count and with the RC3 you can tell it is a quality unit. It's not too 'disco' but





the quality in build and materials is immediately evident – these guys are back into off-road and they mean business! The shock features dual-speed compression adjustment for high and low-speed control in the compression cycle as well as rebound control.

"That's not different!" I hear you cry and you'd be right – but the main tech differences with this shock are the off-road truck inspired piston design, high quality DLC coating on the main shaft and specially coated body and piston. As well as these details the all-new FAST adjust system allows for the most simple spring preload adjustment on the market today – a 4mm allen key is all that is required and incremental changes can be made on preload as the allen key locker stays in one place but the adjustment ring moves freely around. It can then be stopped when the adjustment is exact. This is super-simple and with no need to beat the crap out of the adjustment and lock rings they are onto a winner!

The next major – and possibly the best – innovation with the RC3 is the Proprietary Bottom-Out Control or BOC. This is a completely separate internal cycle within the shock with an external adjuster to control the amount of bottom-out resistance you want in your shock

setting. This is absolutely brilliant in its concept and innovation as many riders opt for a harder setting than necessary to give bottoming resistance making the shock slightly too hard through part of the mid-stroke cycle.

The BOC adjust alleviates this problem with its completely isolated part of the stroke allowing a rider to run with a perfect setting through the stroke for the optimum absorption and if it bottoms more than once or twice a lap simply click the BOC in a couple of clicks and the bottoming is taken care of! The bottom-out control is a 24-click adjuster and adds from 800 pounds to 1400 pounds of damping force in the last 20mm of the stroke! All with a few clicks with a screwdriver. That is superb. And the units are available with steel or titanium springs for the weight-conscious among us.

So there you have it! Given the technology involved in the RC3 and the quality of the finished article it seems Fox Racing Shox are back – and they are back with the same innovation, engineering prowess and drive they had way back in the 'good old days' ...

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FORMER 500GP RUNNER ED BRADLEY TAKES THE NEW BLUE YZ250F NIPPER RIPPER FOR A BLAST AT DONCASTER MOTO PARC AND GETS MORE THAN HE BARGAINED FOR...

Words by Ed Bradley Photos by Monster Pictures

With Jeff Perrett and Tony Marshall down at Marshfield testing the 2010 KTM's the same day as Yamaha were launching their 2010 YZ250F at Doncaster Moto Parc we were seriously stuck. Even if Sutty hadn't been on holiday the fact he's currently limping on both legs counted him out and Angry Geoff was busy preparing for a downhill MTB World Cup event in France.

What we needed was someone who was A) bike fit and B) in the area. Of course C) frikkin' fast would also be a bonus. As luck would have it, Doncaster Moto Parc is run by top MX coach Ed Bradley who happens to be A) super-fit and B) on-site most of the time. And being a former 500GP rider he's also C) frikkin' fast. Sorted!

Over to you Ed...

"The day of the test I was supposed to be setting off on an 850-mile cycle from Lands End to John O'Groats but the chance to rip around my own track on a 2010 YZ250F was too good to turn down. So the start of my marathon trip was delayed by 24 hours and instead of Cornwall I found myself at Finningley. For a change!"

"Arriving at the track there were two 2009 250Fs and the new 2010 model. The guys at Yamaha explained that we could ride both bikes to make a comparison and then went on to tell us all the wonderful new things about the new bike – but more about those later, first I wanted to have a rip around the really well-prepped track, get the feel of this year's bike, learn how to get the most from it and then have a look at the 2010 machine."

"At first sight you notice the difference in styling between the '09 and 2010 bikes –

I prefer the new straight lines which give next year's model far more of a 'racer' look compared to its predecessor. All the plastics are different, including the tank and air box. This alone gave me the feeling of wanting to jump on it and tear off down the start straight!

"Up close the new rad scoops have the Yamaha emblem embedded in the black plastic which is designed to improve grip and help remove clinging dirt on the bike. Almost as importantly it looks trick and there's no way you're going to hook your boots on the end of those scoops when you have your leg out for a corner!"

"Looking closer you'll notice that the bilateral beam frame is a big change and that there seems to be far more room around the motor for working on it. The air box intake is also different – it's straight through and I imagine that this will make it easier when fitting the subframe. Instead of fumbling around trying to fit the boot onto the carb it looks like it should be much easier to push the boot straight on and there is also now an oil level window gauge which I think is a nice touch and has been a long time coming."

"Yamaha say that the clutch spring load has changed although I didn't notice because the clutch action still felt light and positive due to a change of ratio on the push lever."

"Sitting on the bike it's immediately noticeable that the seat/tank junction is a lot wider and a little flatter compared to the '09 model. This felt good and much more familiar to other bikes that I have ridden. The handlebar and footpegs seem to be in a similar position to the '09 model and there is now the option to move the bar clamps into four different positions making the bike a more comfortable fit for a much larger range of rider sizes." >>





Former 500GP rider Ed Bradley
slams the 2010 YZ250F through a
turn at Doncaster Moto Park

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"The bike was easy to start both from cold and when hot (using the hot start when the bike had just been ridden it fired up first kick). As I rode the new YZF onto the track it felt similar to the '09 machine – for me a little small and as if I was going to bang my knees on the bars when going into turns or when man-handling it around the technical parts of the track. But I quickly found out that the bike turns really easily and that there's more than enough room for a tall guy like me to move from standing to sitting at the front of the bike. This for me was a big plus for helping me to ride the bike very quickly and easily."

"It was also fun practising starts. Compared to my 450F I reckoned the new Yamaha would be a child's play so without holding on too tightly I dumped the clutch and ended up on the back wheel all the way down the start straight, feverishly clutching it to stop me from looping out! The next start I took more seriously and sat right at the front (which is really easy with the new seat and low tank), held on tight and let it rip. Wow! It's hard to believe it's just a 250F!"

"The suspension was a little soft for my liking

but I'm sure that altering the clickers would have kept me off the bottom part of the stroke on landings and hard hits. What did feel good though was that the travel was both plush and smooth all the way through the stroke giving what I would describe as gentle and accurate feedback from the surface of the track.

"The bike also kept good traction on the rear wheel when accelerating out of turns which meant that I could really use the engine's torque to its full effect. The front end held the ground really well when braking and feeding the bike accurately into the many different lines for the corners – whether they were off-camber, bermed or just plain flat."

"To get the most out of the suspension I gave the brakes a good work out and the only difference I noticed between the '09 and 2010 models was that the back brake was easier to feel, rather than being an on/off switch. The front felt much the same, strong with good feel on the lever."

"What did light me up about this bike (as well as the easy turning) was the motor. The bottom-end is great and has plenty of torque to

pull you out of tight and slow corners – the bike just picks up awesome and is very strong. I had a lot of fun using the mid-range on two corners in particular. These turns were long, flat sweepers where if I had given the bike a big handful I would have been doing high-speed doughnuts but instead I was using a constant mid-range rev which was both strong, smooth and fast. The best bit was opening the throttle – the response from the motor's quick and strong with the motor eager to get into the top-end."

"Once into the top-end it was very similar to the '09 and felt all right. You don't have to wait long to get to the peak revs and it didn't finish quickly either. Like I said, it was all right and I'm sure that – if you're a revver – then some kind of aftermarket hop-up would give you even more there if you wanted it."

"Overall the YZ250F is a big improvement on last year's bike. The top-end power is okay but the bottom and mid-range power is great and it handles and turns like a dream. There's plenty of room to balance and move around on the bike and these aspects make the new Yamaha 250F a very competitive machine."

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YZ250F

SPECIFICATIONS >>

Capacity: 250cc

Bore and stroke: 77mm x 53.6mm

Transmission: Five-speed

Fuel tank capacity: 6.4 litres

Front suspension: Kayaba 48mm (300mm travel)

Rear suspension: Kayaba (310mm travel)

Seat height: 991mm

Wheelbase: 1473mm

Ground clearance: 377mm

Kerb weight: 102kg



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Bryan MacKenzie's risen to the challenge of racing factory bikes

ANNUS HORRIBILIS

IT ALL STARTED SO PROMISINGLY BUT FOR CAS HONDA THE 2009 SEASON HAS BEEN A YEAR TO FORGET. WE CAUGHT UP WITH TEAM MANAGER NEIL PRINCE TO FIND OUT JUST WHAT WENT WRONG...

Words by Jen Dick Photos by Satty

It's been a nightmare year for the CAS Honda team. Injuries have screwed the team's progress pretty much from the get-go and the Corby-based outfit are currently bang in the middle of a massive results drought. With the end of the season rapidly closing in we caught up with the multiple British championship winners to see just exactly what's going on and why this has been one of their toughest seasons yet...

The problems with team leader Billy MacKenzie have already been well documented. Despite taking on a whole new training programme and having the motivation to go out and win the world championship, things just haven't gone Billy's way with injury after injury hampering the progress of the 25-year-old Scot. But Billy's not the only CAS team rider to struggle in '09...

Following two uncompetitive development years on an Aprilia, Cedric Melotte was full of enthusiasm heading into this season and looking to prove that he's still got the pace to run at the front. A positive pre-season testing schedule in Southern Spain proved that Cedric was still capable of getting on the gas and with Billy still going full-bore at this point things were looking good for the team.

"Cedric was feeling good and I believe he started the season off very well – he was super-strong and very fast," reckons CAS Team

Manager Neil Prince. "Everything was going good with Billy too pre-season, his fitness came on well and he was riding very fast so everything was going in the right direction. But then when Billy developed tendonitis things became difficult."

The opening British championship round at Canada Heights was disappointing for CAS but during the second moto of round two at Langrish – after a bit of bad luck in the opening race – MacKenzie was in a class of his own. But while sitting on a six-second lead and looking incredibly at ease, the injury woes that had kept him off the bike and out of condition allowed Max Nagl to reel him in during the final five minutes. Then as the German star applied a serious amount of pressure MacKenzie got caught out big time. With the first GP looming Billy was set back even further with broken ribs, bad bruising and battered confidence.

"A lot of people said a lot of things about Billy," says Neil. "But what they didn't realise was the fact he didn't do any riding in the week on the new bike. The only time he was riding was at the races and this isn't good for a rider. That's why he would start fast and fade towards the end with pump-up or because he got tired. Many people said he was unfit but he was only doing motos at the weekend and that's the only way we could do it."

"Billy has always been a rider known for his inconsistency, making mistakes and crashing or getting tired. This year things were different and I believe he had put the effort in during the winter so he was much fitter than before. You can ask anyone who saw him in California just how good he was going pre-season and it all went downhill when the tendonitis came on." >



team profile

An ongoing back injury has seen Cedric Melotte sidelined for much of the season



Billy Mac kicked off the season with tendonitis and then picked up a serious hand injury in Portugal

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TEAM MANAGER

PRINCEY MUCKS IN...

Neil likes to take a hands-on approach and does a lot of the work himself so his role is incredibly diverse.

"My main priority is making sure the riders are happy, then I have to ensure the mechanics have everything they need as well as making sure the bikes are organised and running good enough to do the job," explains the former British champion. "I feel happier if I know everything that's going on within the team so I can keep things under control which means it's a very varied job and I'm always very busy as there are so many aspects to running a GP team."

"People don't always see the unglamorous side

of our jobs. In all the years we've had the team we've been very lucky but this year has been a bit of a nightmare. We've had trucks breaking down halfway across Germany, tyre blowouts and a tremendous amount of problems that have all had to be dealt with. Since the start of the season it's been an uphill battle for us with everything going on but I guess it happens to everyone like that at some point."

"Thankfully our sponsors know what we are capable of and what we've done in the past. All of our sponsors – Honda, Monster Energy and Fox Racing – have given us a lot of support when things have been tough this year. We've had a lot of bad luck so hopefully things will improve time."

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Meanwhile, Melotte was looking good on his new mount. He was gaining pace and performing well before the opening GP wash-out in Faenza and headed to round two at Bulgaria feeling confident. Cedric put in some good times throughout practice but bad luck hit CAS Honda once again when he jarred his back on an uphill section of the circuit in the first moto, aggravating an old injury which left him laid out on the awning floor in agony. A visit from the Clinica Mobile ruled him out of race two with a disc problem.

"Cedric did his back in on pretty much the first or second lap of that race in Bulgaria," says Neil. "He said the bike bottomed out and compressed a disc in his back – an old injury – which turned out to be a degenerative disc we didn't know about."

Cedric flew back to Belgium for treatment while Billy tried to figure out how to get fit while still troubled with injury. A tweaked ankle didn't make matters any better and heading to races after injections in his arm – as well as having had no practice time – left him on the back foot.

As the team tramped over to Valkenswaard for round four of the world championship things seemed to be improving. Cedric was back on the bike and blasted out a fighting performance to clinch sixth in qualifying with MacKenzie second. And on race day Billy showed his true speed by battling at the front of the pack although he would go on to fade towards the end of the motos while Melotte's performance was good too until his injury gremlins got the better of him and meant he couldn't start race two.

While Melotte missed more races MacKenzie soldiered on and heading into Portugal he had managed to bag some bike time and was definitely feeling better prepared. A small slip off in practice put paid to that though leaving him with a thumb problem that would

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Billy Mac's back in action again but the season's more or less ruined for the flying Scot



All the early signs were good with Melotte and Billy looking fast and fit



Princey is delighted with Bry Mac's progress since he came into the team

effectively end his season.

"Going into Portugal Billy had finally had time on the bike after the tendonitis cleared up," explains Neil. "In fact he'd ridden for 14 intensive hours in just two weeks before a small crash in practice set him back again. Billy wanted to continue riding but the thumb injury didn't get any better and week-in, week-out he was not able to ride or practice yet again. He had anaesthetic in the joint at every race and we had to keep increasing this to hide the pain until it didn't work anymore. He did throw in some good results with a good race in Spain and a fifth in England so it was a difficult decision to know what to do, especially with so many Honda riders out with injury."

Melotte's situation was also not so straightforward. After being unable to complete first practice in Spain he was taken off the bike and brought to the UK so the team could find out exactly what was going on. The Belgian rider had tried epidural injections, physiotherapy and treatment from his own doctor with no success so with many wasted trips out with the bike the team needed to get to the bottom of the cause.

"Cedric was a different situation. He would come to race, find he was in pain then after two weeks come back again after having a gel injection in his back saying he was feeling much better. He kept trying to come back and race but eventually we decided to bring him over the UK so we could see exactly what was going on with our own doctor. We took him for an MRI scan and he turned out to have a degenerative disc in his back."

"It's not so bad that he needs an operation but he needs time off the bike and at his age we felt it was better for him to rest until he was properly ready to come and ride. We've since found out it's a problem he's had for some years and maybe in hindsight we should have looked at this before we signed him."

The team was faced with another tough decision. With a seat available in the squad for the foreseeable future who could step into Cedric's shoes and not conflict with the team's current sponsors? It may seem simple but as the team was heading to its home GP the pressure was on and not every rider was willing to hop straight into the CAS set-up.

"We looked at getting a young British rider into the team that we could bring on because we've always >>

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been criticised in the past for not giving young Brits a chance," says Neil. "I offered quite a few riders the job – in fact there was a short list of about five riders – but mid-season it's just not that easy to take an already-signed rider into a team without any conflicts of interest."

At this point Neil had the trouble of hunting for a rider and keeping sponsors happy as well as keeping team morale high. It was proving difficult to arrange and after much deliberation Billy's cousin Bryan MacKenzie was drafted into the CAS Honda outfit. Although he wasn't the obvious choice for a factory ride, his hunger and determination were refreshing.

"I'm very happy to be working with Bryan because of the improvements he's made," admits Neil, "although I'm sure we could have done the same thing with any of the other riders we looked at. We've had a lot of success in the past but for us as long as we're making progress forwards the team morale is good. Bryan is a rider that tries very hard and if you look at his riding before he came to the team, no-one would have said he could have finished top 10 at GP level."

"Many people have mentioned that Bryan hasn't yet won a British championship race but for me if you look at where he was at in the beginning of the season and where he's at now – holeshotting and leading races – he's in a different league with the amount of progress he's made. That's quite satisfying for us."

Of course, Billy's back riding again and although his fitness is going to be in question after so long off a bike it's clear from his performances at Duns in the Maxxis British championship and in the energy-sapping sand of Lierop at the Grand Prix of the Netherlands that he's still as fast and as hungry as ever. And it's a hunger for racing that Billy shares with his team – a hunger that will carry them through the tough times and back to the top.



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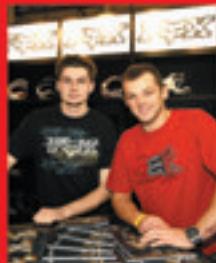
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IT'S WET, WET, WET IN BONNIE SCOTLAND BUT NOT EVEN TORRENTIAL RAIN CAN DAMPEN SWORDY'S AND ANDO'S CELEBRATIONS AS THEY WRAP UP THE MAXXIS CHAMPIONSHIPS ONE ROUND EARLY...

Words and photos by **Sutty**

It's around 18 years since British championship motocross last visited sunny Scotland and there's no denying that the now Maxxis-sponsored series has come on leaps and bounds since Dave Thorpe, Rob Herring, Merv Anstie and the boys locked bars around the Pathcondie circuit in Fife.

Situated some 70 or so miles south of that epic stomping ground lies the Duns circuit, deep in the Scottish Borders. It's possible for both championships to be clinched today which would make it so much sweeter for the champions elect as MX2 leader Stephen Sword's home-town of Lockerbie and MX1 supremo Brad Anderson's 'hood – Tow Law – are both within an 80-mile radius which makes the Duns race their 'local'.

A whopping 44 points clear of Red Bull KTM UK team-mate Jake Nicholls coming into round seven of the series, Stephen Sword only has to beat his younger rival by six points on the day to claim his fourth British championship title. And while it's not unfeasible for Sword to do the double (which would be good enough for the Scotsman to claim the crown no matter what Jake manages) there's a wild card thrown into the mix – the return of reigning champ Shaun Simpson.

With heavy rain falling and the Duns track a rutted mess getting the holeshot is all-important and when the gate drops it's Simpson, Sword and Nicholls all right there from the off. But while Sword and Simpson slip slide away at the front Nicholls falls into the clutches of Mel Pocock, Martin Barr, Mattis Karro and t'other challenger for the runner-up spot in the MX2 series Neville Bradshaw. Trying an aggressive move to get back ahead of The Beast, Nicholls slips off and leaves himself with a whole heap of work to do.

Meanwhile up at the front of the pack it's the Shaun Simpson show with Swordy co-starring. As the laps go by the gap between the two stays about the same until Shaun jumps off the track on an uphill double and spins out on the infield grass handing the lead to Sword. But when Simpson catches back up with Stephen to battle for the lead Sword does the wise thing and concentrates on the points race instead, allowing Simpson to rattle on by for the win.

It's already looking bad for Nicholls when the leading pair lap him while he's running 14th – the position where he'll eventually finish – but the final nail in the championship coffin is actually struck between motos when the second motos are cancelled meaning that instead of 75 points being up for grabs only 50 remain and so Sword's 55-point lead just can't be beaten.

"This is my fourth British title but the first time I've

won it this way," says Swordy. "It's great to win the championship again and especially here on home soil with a lot of the people who have helped me over the years here watching. The team has done an awesome job this year to help me to my fourth title and I have to thank them a lot as well as Jodie and my family too."

In MX1 it's the return of Billy MacKenzie that creates the biggest buzz with the mostly Scottish crowd – especially after his lightning fast qualifying lap sees him claim pole over two seconds clear of Gareth Swanepoel while series leader Brad Anderson can only manage eighth.

When the gate drops it's CCM's comeback kid Ray Rowson who gets to turn one first as MacKenzie hogs the inside of the 180 degree corner. But with the factory Honda throttle to the stops he can only manage to turn 90 of them before veering across the front of the pack and into that all-important early lead – skills Billy! Behind MacKenzie is CCM's Tom Church, Anderson, Carl Nunn, Rowson and Jason Dougan while Swanepoel flounders in 11th.

Although it's TC who sets fastest lap of the race on lap one it's MacKenzie who ekes out a small lead over the next few and that gap becomes even bigger when Church bails off over the whoop section allowing Anderson through to second. And Ando's gifted another place when MacKenzie ploughs into a lapper leaving the red plate holder out front.

While Anderson holds on to take the win there's mixed fortunes for the CCM boys as Rowson secures second from MacKenzie's grasp with two tours to go, Dougan's clutch cries enough while safely sitting fourth and Church snatches fifth from Swanie on the final lap after extracting himself from the depths of a Duns bog.

With a 68-point lead over the South African in the series standings Anderson scores the championship win while he's soaping himself up in the shower as the officials call it quits before the second block of racing. "To win the championship is unbelievable," reckons an emotional Brad. "That first moto was very tough with the deep ruts out there and I was concentrating on not making any mistakes and preserving my bike for the second moto but unfortunately that's now been cancelled. I can't describe how much winning this title means to me – being British champion is something I've wanted to be since I was eight years old."

While both champions are crowned already there's still plenty to be settled at the final round of the series at Landrake in Cornwall as the battle for third in MX1 and the runner-up spot in the MX2 division is far from over...

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Brad Anderson	PAR Homes Honda	289 points
2	Gareth Swanepoel	KRT Kawasaki	231
3	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	203
4	James Noble	STR Honda	201
5	Tom Church	Buildbase CCM Racing	178
6	Scott Columb	Relentless Suzuki	152
7	Jason Dougan	Phoenix Tools CCM	150
8	Billy MacKenzie	CAS Honda	147
9	Bryan MacKenzie	CAS Honda	113
10	Alex Snow	Red Bull KTM UK	97

MX2 >>

1	Stephen Sword	Red Bull KTM UK	274 points
2	Neville Bradshaw	DB Racing Honda	219
3	Jake Nicholls	Red Bull KTM UK	215
4	Martin Barr	Relentless Suzuki	193
5	Scott Elderfield	PAR Homes Honda	171
6	Mattis Karro	MVR-D Suzuki	170
7	Wayne Smith	Samsung Yamaha	156
8	Graeme Irwin	Red Bull KTM UK	147
9	Pascal Leurte	MAR Honda	135
10	Mel Pocock	UTAG Yamaha	134

brit mx wrap

Shaun Simpson nails a comeback holeshot from series leader – and soon-to-be new champion
– Stephen Sword



Battling the effects of a nasty knee injury, 23-year-old Sicilian Tony Cairoli wraps up his third world motocross championship – his first in MX1 – with a solid performance in the testing sands of Lierop.

Although August ends on a high it's an otherwise unremarkable month for the Yamaha rider with nothing in the way of moto wins and only one podium appearance – and that's only a third overall at Lommel. But it's consistency that wins the title for Cairoli and to be fair he's consistently been the man to beat since he took over the series lead at round three in Turkey.

Believe it or not it's the rider who Tony tore the red plate from back then who's the highest combined scorer in this month's three GPs that are held at Lommel, Loket and Lierop. Even though he's cream of the crop it's still a mixed month for Teka Suzuki's Ken De Dycker who wins three of the month's six motos but fails to make much headway in the championship mostly due to the pair of eighths he struggles to on the hardpack of Czechoslovakia.

TONY EXPRESS!

THE ITALIAN STALLION TONY CAIROLI SIGNS, SEALS AND DELIVERS THE MX1 WORLD TITLE WAY AHEAD OF SCHEDULE WHILE MARVIN MUSQUIN MUST WAIT UNTIL NEXT MONTH'S FINAL ROUND IN BRAZIL TO SEE IF HE WILL BE CROWNED THE KING OF MX2...

Photos by Sarah Gutierrez

MX Panda Clement Desalle takes his maiden overall GP victory at Loket and the LS Motors Honda rider now finds himself embroiled in a three-way scrap for third in the series as he's sandwiched between reigning MX1 world champ David Philippaerts in third and Keeno in fifth with just four points separating the three. If DP19's gonna keep his hands on the bronze medal he's going to have to do a whole lot better in Brazil than he managed in the Belgian, Czech Republic or Dutch GPs where his average GP score of 33 points falls way short of Desalle's 39 and Keeno's 40.

Red Bull KTM's Max Nagl looks secure in second and barring any injuries or mechanical woes that's where the likeable German star will end the championship. At the other end of the leaderboard a special mention has to go to Manuel 'Diesel' Priem who steers the twin-cylinder Aprilia into the top 10 of the series standings for the first time ever – well done that man!

Another of the micro-manufacturers to celebrate MX1 success this month is CCM who have shot Tom Church back into the top 15 of the world championship standings on their CMX450. The man from Marshfield is currently the highest placed Brit in the series as a month's worth of consistent finishes see the 27-year-old slip past CAS Honda's Billy MacKenzie – who is just one place back in 16th – in the points race. Jason Dougan is the next of the active Brits in 20th while Bry Mac continues to come on leaps and bounds in his rookie half-season as a factory star and sits in 28th position.

If it weren't for legal problems earlier in the year and technical problems in Loket it's likely that the marvellous Marvin Musquin would have lifted the MX2 crown in Lierop too – if not before – but the factory Red Bull KTM racer who started the season on a Honda will now have to wait until the Brazilian GP to seal the deal.

There's just one other man who has a shot of nabbing the title from the Frenchman's grasp but it isn't Bud Racing Kawasaki's Gautier Paulin whose spectacularly bad form in anything resembling sand sees the former MX2 championship leader slip to third in the series and out of the title hunt despite taking an impressive overall win in Loket.

With Paulin out of the picture it's Rui Goncalves who is the final contender to take Marvin's title but still some 32 points back it's unlikely that Rui will ever be MX2 world champion as the already 24-year-old Portugeezer has passed the MX2 age limit due to be enforced in 2010 and beyond. Expect a ***t or bust performance in Canelinha as Rui goes all out to take his first ever world title.

While those three hog the lion's share of moto wins this month there's just one other rider to pass the chequers first and that's



German dream teen Ken Roczen who powers to victory in Loket's opening gambit. Despite missing the opening four GPs Kenny's guaranteed to finish no lower than fifth in the final standings which in his rookie year is impressive no matter which way you slice it.

Another teen to make ripples in the GP scene is Red Bull KTM UK's Jake Nicholls who's currently best of the Brit brat pack in 18th in the WC standings following strong rides in Lommel and Loket and a not-so-strong showing in Lierop.

Right up The Reverend's rear pipe in the championship chase – but still some 20 points back – is Scottish terrier Shaun Simpson who's back with a vengeance (and a suspension linkage on his factory KTM) in Lierop. A mighty fine sixth place in the second moto is Shaun's lot but it's not a bad score considering the amount of time Gauldry's finest has been sat on the sidelines scoffing his mum Vanda's awesome Maltesers cake/slice thing that made a welcome appearance at the Duns round of the British championship – or so I'm told...

New British champion Stephen Sword has a 'mare in the sands of Lommel where a heavy crash in qualification sees the Scotsman join Maier in the commentary box for Sunday's points-paying motos (now there's an incentive to stay on two wheels) and he also struggles at Lierop but a decent outing in Loket adds another 18 points to the tally.

Over in the UTAG camp the apprentice Mel Pocock has a pair of awesome rides in Lommel before going off the boil a bit while team-leader Zach Osborne returns from injury but fails to show the kind of form we've come to expect from the young American star.



SERIES STANDINGS

MX1>>

1	Tony Cairoli	Yamaha Red Bull De Carli	537 points
2	Max Nagl	Red Bull KTM	487
3	David Philippaerts	Yamaha Monster Energy	463
4	Clement Desalle	LS Motors Honda	461
5	Ken De Dycker	Teka Suzuki	459
6	Josh Coppins	Yamaha Monster Energy	449
7	Tanel Leok	Yamaha Red Bull De Carli	382
8	Gareth Swanepoel	Kawasaki Racing Team	238
9	Jon Barragan	Silver Action KTM	229
10	Manuel Priem	Aprilia	195
15	Tom Church	Buildbase CCM Racing	117
16	Billy MacKenzie	CAS Honda	89
20	Jason Dougan	Phoenix Tools CCM Racing	85
27	James Noble	MVR-D Suzuki	39
28	Bryan MacKenzie	CAS Honda	37
31	Brad Anderson	PAR Honda	24
36	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	18
53	Jordan Rose	STR Honda	3

MX2>>

1	Marvin Musquin	Red Bull KTM	490 points
2	Rui Goncalves	Red Bull KTM	468
3	Gautier Paulin	Bud Racing Kawasaki	422
4	Davide Guarneri	Yamaha Ricci Racing	387
5	Ken Roczen	Teka Suzuki	346
6	Steven Frossard	CLS Kawasaki	294
7	Joel Roelants	KTM Junior Team	284
8	Manuel Monni	3C Racing Yamaha	263
9	Nicolas Aubin	Yamaha Ricci Racing	256
10	Xavier Boog	Teka Suzuki	253
18	Jake Nicholls	Red Bull KTM UK	132
19	Shaun Simpson	Red Bull KTM	112
21	Stephen Sword	Red Bull KTM UK	105
23	Zach Osborne	UTAG Yamaha	102
35	Mel Pocock	UTAG Yamaha	33
48	Neville Bradshaw	DB Racing Honda	2



DOUBLE WHAMMY!

THE RED BULL PRO NATIONAL TOUR ROCKS UP AT CANADA HEIGHTS AND PONTRILAS WHERE BIG CROWDS ARE TREATED TO AN EVEN BIGGER HELPING OF BAR-BANGIN' RACING...

Words by Jeff Perrett Photos by Ian Roxburgh

Rounds three and four of the Red Bull Pro Nationals have certainly delivered. There's been some of the biggest crowds seen at any British domestic championship in recent times, pumping sound systems, giant TV screens, FMX displays, motocross try-out areas, parties and competitions but above all there's been stacked-out race programmes, awesome racing and a brilliant atmosphere.

One rider in particular who is loving the Red Bull Pro Nationals is MVR-D Suzuki's Carl Nunn as he now has one hand on the 2009 title and looks set to go down in the history books as the first ever Red Bull Pro Nationals MX1 champion. In the MX2 championship Samsung Yamaha's Wayne Smith and DB Racing Honda's Neville Bradshaw are going the distance as only eight points separate them going into the final round at

Wakes Colne on September 13.

Round three at Canada Heights has it all. Good weather, 6,500 fans plus the top pros and the best youth riders in the country all over one weekend. By close of play STR/Proppa.com Honda's James Noble finally ends Nunny's overall win-streak with 1-2 over Carl's 3-1.

Red Bull KTM UK's Stephen Sword is out on a 450 in an effort to impress British MXdN team manager Mark Eastwood. Although Swordy gets second in the first race after a brilliant battle with Noble he's caught up in a first turn crash second time out and has to work hard to bag fourth. Things go better for Swordy's team-mate Jake Nicholls though and he convincingly takes a double win in the MX2 class and puts himself in the mix with the bigger 450s. Behind him Relentless Suzuki's Martin Barr and Nev Bradshaw duke it out for the other two podium

spots. It's Barr who clinches it on the tie-break with his 3-2 scorecard over Bradshaw's 2-3.

Nunny then shows why he's been chosen for the MXdN with his fourth overall out of five at the following round at Pontrilas. Yet again he puts in a solid, consistent performance with a 1-2. Noble once again keeps him honest and pushes him along but so does Samsung Yamaha's new guest signing Cyril Coulon as he makes an impressive debut moto with a second place. But he can't put it together in the second moto and it's Noble's team-mate Jordan Rose that puts a consistent run together with a 4-3 as Noble comes out strong in the second moto to take the win.

Eastwood himself goes out and takes the MX2 class overall – maybe he should select himself for the team? Only a couple of years away from his 40th birthday he proves what a

The Red Bull Pro Nats series has raised the stakes when it comes to event presentation



Jeff Perrett leads the pre-race shape up and dance session

fantastic racer he is by not only winning the Red Bull Pro Nationals MX2 class with a 1-3 but by also going out in the Fuchs-Sikolene Open championship races and bagging second overall! However, by his own admission, five pounding 25-minute motos in a one day nearly kill him!

Bradshaw claims second on the day with 4-1 and takes a huge chunk out of series leader Smith who has a disastrous second moto. Young Alan Keet takes his first national podium finish with a solid 7-2 performance on his Pro Seal KTM.

The race for the brand new VW transporter in the Proppa.com Van Slam races is going down to the wire! Nunn holds a slender three-point lead over early pace-setter Relentless Suzuki's Scott Columb after winning at Canada Heights. Nobile is in striking distance though as he's only six points off the pace. It all comes down to two crazy sprint laps at Wakes Colne to find out who'll be driving away in the pimped-out van.

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1 >>

1	Carl Nunn	MVR-D Suzuki	426 points
2	James Noble	STR Honda	381
3	Scott Columb	Relentless Suzuki	277
4	Jordan Rose	STR Honda	270
5	Danny Smyth	Wiseco Honda	267

MX2 >>

1	Wayne Smith	Samsung Yamaha	353 points
2	Neville Bradshaw	DB Racing Honda	345
3	Graeme Irwin	Red Bull KTM UK	292
4	Alan Keet	Pro Seal KTM	286
5	Michael Phillips	DB Racing Honda	206



Jake Nicholls is in commanding form at Canada Heights



French flier Johnny Aubert makes sure of his second consecutive E2 world title on day one in Greece

SERIES STANDINGS

ENDURO 1 >>

1	Mika Ahola	Honda	335 points
2	Antoine Meo	Husqvarna	308
3	Simone Albergoni	KTM	271
4	Thomas Oldrati	KTM	237
5	Eero Remes	KTM	219

ENDURO 2 >>

1	Johnny Aubert	KTM	325 points
2	Juha Salminen	BMW	272
3	Joakim Ljunggren	Husaberg	233
4	Bartosz Oblucki	Husqvarna	219
5	Cristobal Guerrero	Yamaha	213

ENDURO 3 >>

1	Ivan Cervantes	KTM	324 points
2	Christophe Nambotin	Gas Gas	292
3	Seb Guillaume	Husqvarna	283
4	Samuli Aro	KTM	258
5	Marcus Kehr	KTM	197

ENDURO JUNIOR >>

1	Oriol Mena	Husaberg	294 points
2	Jeremy Joly	Honda	216
3	Benoit Fortunato	Yamaha	212
4	Victor Guerrero	Yamaha	208
5	Mirko Gritti	Beta	190



Factory Husaberg rider Joakim Ljunggren takes a steadyng prod

Christophe Nambotin trails Ivan Cervantes in the E3 division



GO JOHNNY, GO!

SUPER FAST FRENCHMAN JOHNNY AUBERT WRAPS UP THE '09 ENDURO 2 WORLD TITLE AT THE GP OF GREECE

Words & photos by Jonty Edmunds

He topped the Enduro 2 class on both days at the GPs of Portugal, Spain, Italy, Finland, Slovakia and Mexico and at the GP of Greece KTM factory rider Johnny Aubert puts the finishing touches to his second consecutive E2 world title.

"I know there were some people who doubted my ability to defend the E2 title but with the support of KTM we've proved them wrong," comments Aubert at the end of the opening day's competition in Serres. "I've worked hard all season to prove I'm the fastest."

On day one Aubert is without question the man to beat in E2 but on the very last special test of the day, while taking it easy ahead of his world championship winning celebrations, he crashes on the extreme test and injures his finger. So with the E2 title secured Aubert is forced to retire from day two which really makes things interesting.

Day two sees a three-rider scrap at the top of the class as Juha Salminen, hungry for BMW's first ever WEC victory, Spanish dry weather specialist Cristobal Guerrero and David Knight – who's returning to the series aboard a Kawasaki after his split from BMW – are separated by little at the end of the day's first lap.

As the day progresses Salminen edges ahead while Guerrero and Knight slug it out for the runner-up spot. Eventually separated by just 18 seconds, Juha finally hands BMW their first ever WEC day win – much to the team's delight. "It would have been nice to have beaten Johnny to win but a win is a win," comments Juha.

"We've made big improvements in recent races and if I hadn't have made mistakes on day one, well, I would have been a lot closer to Aubert. I guess things will be interesting for the final round in France now."

Disappointingly for Knight, Guerrero – who lead last year's ISDE in Greece before he DNFed with a broken leg – just manages to grab the runner-up spot by less than half-a-second. "My goal was to be competitive and get on the podium," explains Knight who gives Kawasaki their highest-placed WEC finish in a long, long time. "I had a few problems on day one and wasn't quite as fast as I needed to be on the motocross test but I enjoyed it. It was always going to be difficult coming back into the series but I'm pleased with the way it went. I know where I can make improvements to my riding and bike. I want to be firing on all cylinders for the final round in France."

One rider who most certainly is firing on all cylinders in Greece is Husqvarna's Antoine Meo. Claiming his first ever WEC win at the series' previous round in Mexico, Meo tops the E1 class with ease. "Everything is coming together really well for me now," admits Meo. "I'm riding well, my bike is good, my confidence is good, everything is good. I feel like this is my first real victory because in Mexico Mika Ahola had some problems. Mika's going to win the championship but I know that I have the speed to beat him now."

With Meo claiming a double E1 class win, Ahola – who knows all too well that the '09 E1

title is his for the taking – doesn't even try to compete with the former GP motocrosser.

"If I felt like I could compete against him I would try but he is too fast here. There's no point me taking any risks, it's the championship I'm thinking about now."

Giving Honda plenty to be pleased about, French rider Julian Gauthier places third on both days.

Enduro 3 class leader Ivan Cervantes has one clear goal going into the race in Greece – push as hard as he can to win both days. And that's exactly what he does. Topping the big-bore class on both days the Spaniard is all but assured of the E3 title at the final round in France. "I had to push really hard on both days and the race was tough but I did what I wanted to do," comments a thrilled Cervantes. "I know that Christophe Nambotin and Sébastien Guillaume will both be fast in France, now I don't have to worry about beating them."

Guillaume is the rider who gets closest to Cervantes on day one but finds himself beaten by countryman Nambotin on day two as the two-stroke mounted duo again show themselves as being more than capable of fighting for victory. For five-time world champion Samuli Aro a third on day one is followed by a DNF on day two as he joins the long list of injured riders.

With Enduro Junior world champion Oriol Mena moving up to the E3 class, French rider Benoit Fortunato and Spaniard Lorenzo Santolino share top honours in the EJ category.

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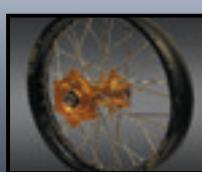


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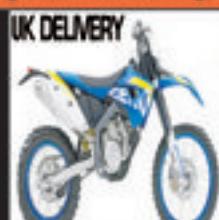
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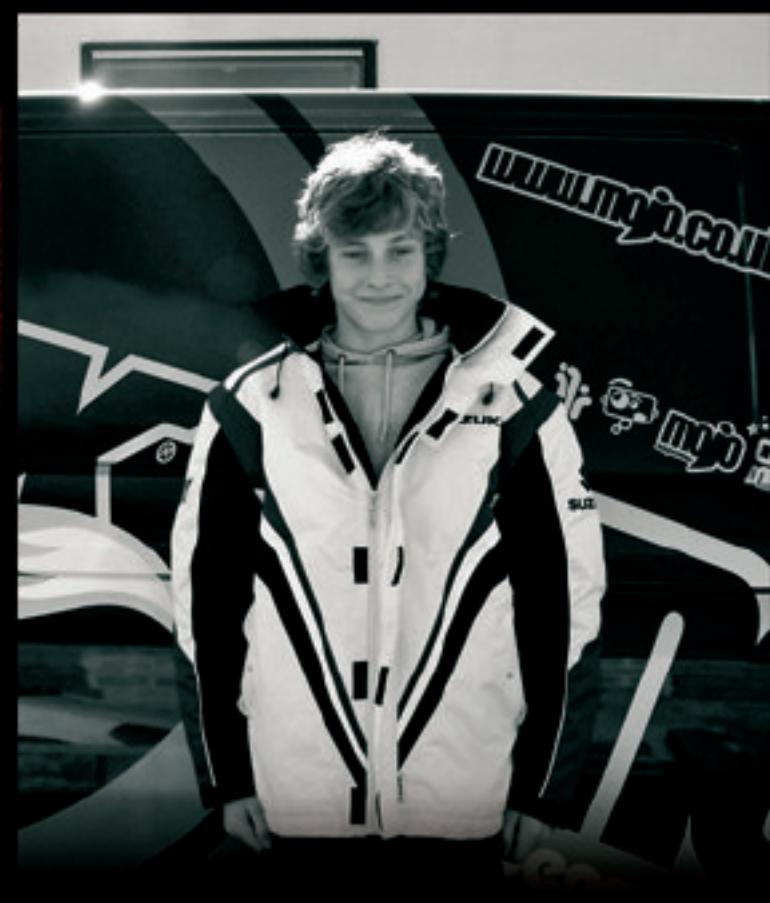
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TRADING
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JAMES DUNN'S MID-SEASON SWITCH
DOWN TO
THE WIRE!

BSMA BATTLES TAKE 2009 SERIES ALL THE WAY

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TRADING PLACES!

AFTER A MEGA START TO THE SEASON ON A BW85cc MACHINE, WHY DID JAMES DUNN SUDDENLY MAKE THE SWITCH TO AN EIGHTH-LITRE STROKER?

Picture this. You're just 14 years old and gearing up for your first full season of BW action. The previous year was a tough pill to swallow and one to forget in many ways as injury cruelly snatched from your grasp one or possibly two chunks of major league silverware.

However, following the opening three rounds of the '09 season you're now sitting pretty in the BYMX series holding down joint-second place. Third place is all yours in the Elite Youth Cup BW standings and you are clear at the top of the BSMA pile after two rounds. As a start to a youth motocross season goes surely it just doesn't get much better than that, does it?

Well young Doodson Suzuki pilot James Dunn obviously thought it could be better. Something wasn't quite right early on in June and he was about to trade places. Quite amazingly, his very next move was to turn his back on the promising 85cc championship campaign and go glory hunting aboard a 125cc two-stroke Suzuki instead.

As the season moved onto the weekend of June 20/21 everyone expected James to be on the BW line for the next round of the BYMX series at Dean Moor in Cumbria. But young Dunn had other ideas and a bigger fish was about to be fried on the opposite coastline over in Yorkshire. To say his debut performance was impressive would be something of an understatement as he tore his way through the Junior section and battered the majority of the adult ranks into submission too at the fifth round of the Fuchs-Silkolene two-stroke championship held at Whitby.

There were rave reviews quite rightly for that performance in Yorkshire with yet more impressed words following round six of the MCF series down at Landrake as James turned in another eye-catching show. Back on the youth trail and hitting round six of the Masters series at Hawkstone Park, James impressed once more as he snatched the final race win on day two together with third place overall in the MXY2 division. All-in-all the move upwards looks to be a real positive one so far with a string of exciting results already in the can.

To shed a bit more light on the situation and the future for James I caught up with Team Doodson Suzuki youth co-ordinator and trainer Paul Butler.

DBR: Can you tell us the reasoning behind the mid-season change of plans for James?

PB: "It was mainly down to James. Although he was only a couple of months past his 14th birthday and had had a magnificent start to the season he felt he was growing too big for the 85cc machine and he was really uncomfortable riding it. We had a couple of practice sessions on a 125cc machine, James loved it from the off and following a team discussion we decided to bite the bullet as it became really obvious this was the best way to go for the long-term."

DBR: How do you see next season panning out competition wise for James?

PB: "We are making next season's new 125cc Euro GP series our number one aim right now as things stand. We would back that up with the



James has impressed following his switch to a 125cc stroker

Elite Youth Cup or a BSMA championship when on home soil."

DBR: In the light of the renewed interest in 125cc two-stroke racing in Europe, if the BYMX were to re-introduce a two-stroke series would you be entering that one too?

PB: "Yes, if there were a BYMX 125cc series that would be a main aim along with the Euro GP series."

DBR: We also hear on the grapevine former world champion and CCM motocross manager Dave Thorpe has been impressed by James' performances recently?

PB: "Yes, that's right. Dave thinks James is right up there talent wise for his age and he has offered a package of specialist fitness training this winter that will fit really well with all the other work we do as Team Doodson at my own training facility the British Moto Cross Academy."

On the wider issue of a possible return to a dedicated schoolboy national 125/150cc two-stroke racing championship Paul Butler was all in favour. He sees the two-stroke machine as the perfect learning tool for many of the 14 and 15-year-old guys who are not quite ready to make the transition to 250F machinery but who have out-grown the 85 both physically, mentally and talent wise.

And we can confirm that at least one of the major schoolboy national series has a return to the format on the menu and up for discussion for 2010. Watch this space...

ON TOP DOWN UNDER!

TOMAC AND WILSON LIFT JUNIOR WORLD TITLES IN TAUPO

Words by Luw Photos by Nic Noc

For the first time in its history the FIM World Junior MX championship leaves European shores and – with the powers-that-be clearly not going for half-measures – heads all the way to Digger McEwen Park in Taupo, New Zealand.

The Taupo club is no stranger when it comes to organising international events and the club doesn't disappoint this time around although the global financial crisis plays its part with most countries opting to send no more than one rider in each group. This is unfortunate but provides the New Zealand and Australian riders with a great opportunity to step up to world championship level.

Every outdoor event hopes for good weather but it's not to be on Saturday with a huge downpour. Luckily the surface unique to Taupo is a mixture of pumice soil and rock so soaks up water well and the track holds up well.

Free practice starts on Saturday at 9am for 85cc, 65cc and 125cc and qualifying follows in the same order. The 65cc class has three races as a support class but for 2010 the FIM are introducing the 65cc division as part of the world champs. Josiah Natzke (NZ) is a name for the future.

In the 85cc qualifying French kid Dillon Ferrandis – who finished third in last year's championship – qualifies first ahead of Aussie Jay Wilson and Lars van Berkel from Holland while, up in the 125cc qualis, all eyes are on Eli Tomac from the United States. But it's Tye Simmons from Australia who puts in the fastest time from Dutch hotshot Glenn Coldenhoff with

Tomac back in a surprise third.

Sunday starts overcast but the rain holds off. Ferrandis set a blistering pace on the Saturday but disaster strikes in the first practice session when he slips off and breaks his wrist. With the Frenchie out of the running the opening 85cc race sees Wilson take the win from Dillon Long and Haydren Mellross as the Aussies fill the top three.

Second time out it's Italian Samuele Bernardini who nails a gate-to-flag win from Holland's Michaboy de Waal as Wilson takes third – and the world title. A special mention should also go to Courtney Duncan – the young Kiwi girl can race hard with the boys and doesn't back off once on her way to a very creditable sixth overall.

Kiwi Hamish Dobbyn, who had a brief spell in Europe last season, grabs the holeshot in the opening 125cc moto and clings on for 15 minutes until Tomac finds a way through and holds it to the flag. Hamish keeps his head for second from Aussie Tye Simmons. Brit battler Jamie Collins gets a bad drop out of the gate but records a not-too-bad 29th.

Race two sees Simmons yank the holey which he translates into a gate-to-flag win. Tomac rounds the first corner back in ninth but by the flag has pushed up to second to make sure of the world title. Australian Luke Styke takes third while Dobbyn's fourth-place finish is good enough for the bronze medal. Collins – who'll be racing back in England in the New Year – fairs much better in his final outing with 20th for 25th overall.



Battling Brit
Jamie Collins

Hamish Dobbyn takes the 125cc bronze



Eli Tomac celebrates his 125cc world title



Collins fires himself down a Taupo descent



Courtney Duncan



Aussie Jay Wilson takes the 85cc world title

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SPOTLIGHT ON...

LEONNITIGHE

DOB: 11-09-00 HOMETOWN: ROCHDALE RIDE: KTM 50cc AUTO

At just eight years old little Leonni Tighe has already amassed a truly impressive collection of silverware together with more winning titles than my local library. To quote her dad Gareth "she's not just your average eight-year-old girl and she's taking on some of the fastest boys in the country".

This current season, however, has been predominantly directed towards the girls' national taking place this weekend (September 12/13) at Brookthorpe. Last year's national at Foxholes delivered possibly the highlight of young Leonni's career so far as she went so very close on that occasion to winning the Auto crown. She claimed two of the six race wins over the weekend but at the final count had to settle for second place on the box, just four points short of Charlie Townsend's winning total.

This year at Brookly Leonni will be determined to go one place better to end her Auto days on the ultimate 50cc high. And if her recent podium topping form at Leisure Lakes for Vale MXC and in North Wales for Red Dragons is anything to go by Leonni is going to be a tough act to beat down in Gloucestershire.

This season's other highlights for Leonni have included a third place overall finish in the Auto Dominator series and an impressive fourth place result at the Dirt 3-2-1 supercross event. As one door closes this season with the end of the Auto days another one will quickly open as Leonni swaps the 50 for a 65cc KTM machine with the winter Future West SX series high on the wishlist so watch out boys!

You can catch up with Leonni and check out how she gets on via her website www.Leonni119.piczo.com



ORDER OF THE BOOT! FOX YOUTH PLATOON COMES TOGETHER

The MC Federation Fox Boot Camp programme is going down a storm at the Red Bull Elite Youth Cup,

not only with the kids themselves but also the parents – they seem to struggle to keep their emotions in check when the kids are selected! And it's no wonder as Fox offer up boots, pants, shirt and gloves for three lucky winners at each round of the championship.

And it doesn't end there as each kid will then enter the Fox Boot Camp at the end of the year. After the eight rounds are wrapped up the 24 selected riders will be off on a secret sortie for a day of training with the Fox GI Pros. The likes of British champions Brad Anderson, Stephen Sword, Carl Nunn, Billy MacKenzie and Elliot Banks-Browne will get together with the high-ranking officers from Fox Europe and put the young troops through their paces. Once they've assessed their performances, two of the 24 riders will become fully-supported Fox athletes for 2010.

With six rounds gone the platoon is up to 18 and every single one of them have been pumped to be called up and are already thinking about their special mission at the end of the year.

"It's so cool to be selected for the boot camp, it makes you feel special – like someone other than your friends and family is taking notice of the effort you're putting in," reckons Ty Kellet who's also been selected by Red Bull to be part of their Dirt Rats video project.

And that's exactly how the system works – the whole programme isn't just aimed at the riders that are necessarily winning races or fighting for podiums. Riders win a spot in the boot camp for style, endeavour and personality – of course technique and potential are also taken into consideration but they're not the be-all and end-all. Because of their efforts or simply for who they are, these are the riders who are already looking forward to their day's training...

Aaron Burns – 65cc	#96	Troy Willerton – 65cc	#74
Chelsea Gowland – BW	#123	Corie Southwood – SW	#44
Josh Williams – Rookie	#221	James Harrison – BW	#153
Taylor Hammal – 65cc	#23	Oliver McMurray – SW	#46
Troy Wharton – BW	#33	Harry Wichman – 65	#38
Ty Kellet – Rookies	#98	Jake Deacon – 65	#21
Danny Lanfear – SW	#7	Alfie Smith – Elite Open	#54
Scooter Webster – SW	#18	Arron Jenner – Rookie	#42
Jake Millward – BW	#303	Aaron Ongley – 65cc	#75

Aaron Burns, Chelsea Gowland and Josh Williams are all through to the Fox Boot Camp



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DOWN TO THE WIRE!

WITH ONE ROUND TO GO IT'S STILL ALL TO PLAY FOR IN THE BSMA'S BEST OF BRITISH SERIES

The BSMA 'Best of British' series may well not be the very best if you consider the total depth of the youth talent and sheer glitz to be found in the rival BYMX and EYC championships. But there is one particular area where the BSMA can claim to be the best this year.

With a set of championships that are already as tight as a drum and with the rules allowing for the dropping of worst results in the final totting up procedure they have four championships going right down to the wire.

The penultimate round kicked off at Brookthorpe and on paper at least in the Junior 65s that little man of the moment Conrad Mewse still had a fired up Jake Deacon on his championship case, waiting in the wings for any kind of opportunity should Conrad falter. And Conrad did falter – if only very slightly – but it lead to his most impressive ride of the weekend coming in the only moto out of five that he didn't actually win.

After going down early in moto two Conrad then proceeded to deliver a real masterclass, charging from a distant last place to quite gloriously snatch second place at the final flag behind race winner Jake. At the end of the meeting the 10-year-old guys had ruled conclusively again with Conrad stretching his lead just a little bit more over Jake while David Keet battled away to finish in third place overall.

With joint-second SW runner Danny Lanfear unluckily picking up an injury prior to the event it was all down to the recent BSMA final winner (and also joint-second runner) Curtis Blamey to put the squeeze on Liam Knight at the top. Over the two days Curtis displayed to good effect his usual blend of scintillating starts and speedy racing action punctuated with a few hairy

moments here and there. The end result was a set of three fine and dandy second place finishes but no real squeeze!

Jack Wilson with the wind well and truly in his sails pinched the final race win. That finish along with his previous 3-4-2-4 card ensured Jack claimed a worthy second overall just in front of Curtis. But Liam was the undoubtedly unsqueezable SW king, running away with the other four moto wins. And it should have been five as Liam was impressively head, shoulders and generally many, many bike lengths in front of the weekend chasers.

Powerhouse performances from weekend winner Alex Meadows and Jordan Divall plus a comprehensive three-race winning blitz from guest rider Sunny Thompson on day one illuminated the BW section. On the championship front if Alex can reproduce the magic at the final round with his worst results in the bin he could yet end up as the season's top dog and best in class.

Jay Thomas managed to hang on to his overall championship lead with a seventh place overall finish while in front of Jay sound performances from Luke Newman, Jack Timms and Carl Haycock plus a hard-charging day two show from Jack Gardner all resulted in this particular title hunt closing up even more with just 37 points now covering the top three.

Luke Dean, although not registered in the Senior championship, caught the eye on the two-stroke Yamaha as he carved up the section with a 1-3-1-1-2 scorecard. It was, however, another recent BSMA final winner – Jansen Day – who scooped up the most championship points and closed the gap on Arron Jenner at the top as David Sweet lost a little ground, slipping back to third in the title chase.

*David Sweet
loses ground*

SERIES STANDINGS

JUNIOR 65cc

1	Conrad Mewse	1066 points
2	Jake Deacon	1008
3	David Keet	915
4	Albie Wilkie	804
5	Tommie Schofield	779
6	Alexander Walton	753

SW85cc

1	Liam Knight	1032 points
2	Curtis Blamey	966
3	Ben Beadle	860
4	Greg Evans	815
5	Danny Lanfear	761
6	Tyron Cleaver	710

BW85cc

1	Jay Thomas	842 points
2	Luke Newman	806
3	Jack Gardner	805
4	Ricky Roderick	794
5	Jack Timms	778
6	Charley Mills	775

SENIORS

1	Arron Jenner	1036 points
2	Jansen Day	960
3	David Sweet	959
4	Alex Hussey	899
5	Scott Bates	815
6	Piers Skinner	774



**BW85cc leader
Jay Thomas**

**Jack Gardner charges
hard on day two**



**Luke Dean grips it
and rips it**



Billy was hoping to go
great guns at Duns...





A C H E S AND PAINS!

MAKING HIS GP COMEBACK IN THE DEEP SAND OF LIEROP WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE BIG ASK AND BILLY'S STILL FEELING THE PAIN...

Words by Billy MacKenzie Photo by Sutty

Well it's the Wednesday after Lierop and I'm still hurting. This has been the first year I've actually realised how much I've missed my bike fitness. All the years I've been racing, since I was six years old, you come to have a natural fitness on a bike – like your heart rate can be up around 185bpm on the bike but you will feel like you're around 140bpm just because it's natural for you. Does that makes sense?

Anyways, I guess what I'm coming round to talk about is how tough it was at Lierop and why I was so s**t – AGAIN! I had kept up on my training while injured and felt good enough for a return I thought. I needed to get back on the bike whatever so Lierop was the planned comeback – I didn't have high expectations for it, I just wanted to try to do my best and that was the team's attitude too.

I'd been riding through the week, just building up each session in the sand. Practising more on my technique and balance rather than flat-out motos, just keeping my feet up and standing a lot like I used to do last year. This year I've felt like I've been riding too aggressive and in my head I think that may be the reason I've been crashing or getting injured? Who knows?

Lierop ain't the best track to come back to but I'd had good results there in the past and I normally enjoy the track so it wasn't like I was dreading it and I actually enjoyed the practice sessions, then a seventh in the qualifying race was a really good start for the weekend. The qualifying race is only 20 minutes so I managed to hang it out for that long – I was up front and riding good lap times until my arms pumped up, then I was just ragging it round trying to keep my position. I had so many close moments!

I'm actually sitting in front of the TV right now watching the replay – I got to a point in the second race where I just couldn't stand up anymore and I can remember why now! There wasn't one place on the track you could sit down – it was like doing 6000 squat jumps a lap (unless your name was Ken and you could just do calf raises)...

The first race I guess you could say was a decent comeback ride until the last lap. I was running up front for the first little while, then I dropped back to a semi-decent speed to try keep my cool and sat in 11th for the whole race until one of the big ruts knocked my gear shifter to neutral on the step-up in the woods! I ended up crossing the line in 17th. I think Harry left with one lap to go and met me at the van smiling, not knowing I had dropped it on the last lap! Billy Mac signature move.

Bottom line guys I hope the icecaps and glaciers all melt and drown Lierop so I never have to go back there unfit again! Make that Belgium too.

There's one thing I've realised more than anything this year and that is I don't enjoy riding my bike unfit, injured or unprepared. So for 2010 I'll be praying to the aliens to look after me

and keep me healthy all season long! I've decided to stay with CAS again as I think we missed a lot of opportunities this year to do well. I feel comfortable with the team, we have made great advances with the bike and I owe it to them to get some results after this year with all the effort they have put into me.

Like I've said before, I was better prepared than I ever had been coming into the season but it all went tits up.

The team tried their hardest every weekend and we've now done a lot to the new Honda so for next year I trust the team will have everything sweet and with a year under our belt with the new Honda I think we'll be on top of our game like in '08. I'm already looking towards next year, setting up plans to train, ride and test my heart out and make amends for this year. The team workshop is coming back to Britain and won't be far from where I'm staying now and we've got a new race truck being prepared so we're just trying to forget this year and get on it for 2010.

I was a bit gutted to hear about the des Nations – I really felt I could have been on the team but with my current form Easty had to go with a safe option. Maybe if Easty was allowed a bit more time to pick the team I could have been there but I understand why and I hope the team does well. It's the first time I've been off the Nations since I was picked back in 2003 so I'm a bit gutted to miss a year's full set of gear as I had quite a collection forming!

To be fair to Mark from my point of view I think deep down he really wanted to pick me – we went riding together a few times when I got back on a bike but my performance at Duns really wasn't great and he had to pick the team pronto so that was that. I'd like to say I'd enjoy watching but I won't be there! There was talk of a Scottish team being entered but I don't think that's happening. Would have been fun though!

I had to make a quick getaway from Lierop to drive to the Ken Hall the next day on Bank Holiday Monday! I was hanging from Lierop but it's my local race meeting now and I need time on the bike, no matter where it is or how tired I am! Things started off all right – we were working out the back of our vans like the good old days, having a laugh and the sun was out and the place was packed! Lots of spectators at this race and the track was nice after practice before the sidecars got on it! I only managed to put in a third place finish in the first moto as the next race I ran into someone on the first turn and ripped all my spokes out the front wheel on someone's footpeg. So that was the day over for me because I didn't have any spares with me.

The only race left for me now is the final British round so I'm just gonna ride my bike as much as I can each week and hopefully have my technique back on track for Landrake. It would be nice to end the year with one win at least!

Billy 11



SENTINEL Protector: The Iceman's Armor

When Christophe "The Iceman" Pourcel goes into battle, he's always armed with the Sentinel Protector. The ultra-lightweight Sentinel weighs in at only 1.4 pounds, yet offers heavyweight roost protection without sacrificing mobility.

When the competition gets heated, this moto technician stays cool as a cucumber with plenty of airflow provided by the Sentinel's multi-port venting system. While other roost guards seem bulky and heavy, the Sentinel is sized and shaped specifically for racers that demand performance without restriction.

So lap after lap, the Iceman keeps cool and covered while the competition just melts away.





JAN 10TH	CHASE FIELD PHOENIX, AZ
JAN 17TH	ANGEL STADIUM ANAHEIM, CA
JAN 24TH	RELIANT STADIUM HOUSTON, TX
JAN 31ST	AT&T PARK SAN FRANCISCO, CA
FEB 7TH	ANGEL STADIUM ANAHEIM, CA
FEB 14TH	QUALCOMM STADIUM SAN DIEGO, CA
FEB 21ST	GEORGIA DOME ATLANTA, GA
MARCH 14TH	NEW ORLEANS, LA.
MARCH 28TH	TORONTO, ONTARIO
APRIL 4TH	SUPERDOME ROGERS CENTER
APRIL 25TH	JACKSONVILLE, FL
	RICE-ECCLES STADIUM SALT LAKE CITY, UT

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